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The Italy of the Italians

By

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"Schopenhauer, his Life and Philosophy,"
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"The Epic of Kings," etc., etc.

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Italy, my Italy!
Queen Mary's saying serves for me
(When fortune's malice
Lost her Calais),
Open my heart and you will see
Graved inside of it, "Italy."
Such lovers old are I and she,
So it always was, so shall ever be!

Photo by *Guigoni & Bossi, Milan*

THEIR MAJESTIES THE KING AND QUEEN OF ITALY AND THEIR CHILDREN

FOREWORD

SINCE that memorable year, 1870, Italy has, happily, ceased to be "a geographical expression," as Prince Metternich contemptuously phrased it. Nevertheless, though thousands of travellers over-run her fair borders in the course of each year, in ever increasing numbers, to the greater proportion she still remains little else than a geographical expression, and her citizens are regarded either as the staffage to a lovely landscape or as the custodians of her artistic treasures. These travellers, too, seldom know the language of the land and hence are apt to get their information from guides, hotel porters, cabmen, and others the like. As a result they may see towns and museums but they get little or no idea of Italy's real life and civilization. Few stop even to wonder what are the impulses, the aims, the hopes, the ambitions that cause the heart of this land to pulsate with energy, that virtue on which her greatest poet, Dante, laid such stress. Few enquire what is her present position in the world of European thought. What she gave us in the past, how, together with Greece, we owe her all our culture, is familiar enough. Less familiar, on the other hand, is her contribution to the modern movement, her bequest to the fabrics of contemporary science, art, literature, and philosophy.

It is the aim of this book to give a popular reply to such questions as many an intelligent traveller would fain put, but which he is hindered from pronouncing by his scant knowledge of the language. It does not pretend to be either learned or exhaustive. It only desires to excite an intelligent curiosity in the hope of inducing its readers to prosecute studies on their own behalf in such sections of the vast theme as particularly appeal to their individual sympathies.

And here I must take occasion to acknowledge my grateful

thanks to those who have generously supplied me with information, and especially I would mention Professor Giuseppe Signorini, the late Signor Alfredo Bona, Marchese Ridolfo Peruzzi, Conte Giorgio Mannini, Commendatore Guido Biagi, and Mr. George Gregory Smith. I also acknowledge the permission accorded by the editors of the *Cornhill Magazine* and the *Fortnightly Review* to reprint portions of my own articles. My affectionate thanks are also due to my cousin, Mr. Alfred E. Zimmern, of New College, Oxford, for kind advice, encouragement, and assistance in proof reading.

HELEN ZIMMERN.

Palazzo Buondelmonti, Florence,
August 1, 1906.

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The Italy of the Italians

CHAPTER I

THE KING

IT is told on excellent authority that Queen Victoria, whose long experience of men and things had made her a keen observer, picked out the Prince of Naples from among all the heirs to European monarchies as the most promising and able. Time has justified the old Queen's prophecy. There sits no wiser, keener, more cultured or more modern sovereign on any throne; none who more thoroughly identifies himself with his country or better understands its needs. And all the King does is done so quietly and unobtrusively, without fireworks of phrase or parade of action, that even in Italy it has taken a little while to find out and gauge the new sovereign's value. Still, when he ascended the throne with the new century but a few months begun, it was instinctively hoped, if not felt, that a new and better era was dawning for Italy, and a great wave of hope greeted his advent.

The King.

In order to understand the full reason for this it is needful to cast a bird's-eye glance over Italian politics. At the time of King Humbert's murder (July 29th, 1900) there were unmistakable signs in the air of the near approach of a catastrophe in Italian domestic affairs. A malign influence was leading the various rapidly succeeding Ministries, each and all devoid of a definite programme, along a road of injudicious acts at the end of which

Italian Politics.

loomed the downfall of the Monarchy. The murderer Bresci by his dastardly act saved the monarchical principle in Italy and secured the dynasty to the House of Savoy. King Humbert was no self asserting monarch, it may even be said that he was too constitutional for a young country like Italy where political principles have not yet become fixed. For a strong personality can make itself felt even under the constitutional curb, as witness Humbert's own father, Victor Emmanuel II and our King Edward VII.

Before the corpse of the King, a good-hearted man if not a wise sovereign, before the blood thus wantonly shed, the various political parties stood dismayed and felt it was necessary to draw together and act in patriotic concert ere it became too late. For, as they suddenly perceived, now that their eyes were opened, if the wranglings of political parties and the preachings of extremists were to result in the abolition of the monarchy, the result would have been civil war, a fresh dismemberment of Italy, and renewed foreign intervention.

Defects of the Government.

Beyond question the errors of the Italian Government since the too early death of Cavour, the only Italian statesman endowed with real practical aptitude, have been many and great. The fact is that Italy was made too quickly, the revolution was too suddenly successful: there had not been enough time to allow of the training of free-born citizens. As the patriot Massimo d'Azeglio said, "Italy is made, we must now make the Italians." It would, of course, be absurd to expect a young nation like Italy to have stable arrangements, or precise aims such as pertain to nations that can count centuries of life. Rather, if we look at what Italy was little more than fifty years ago, we have reason to be astonished at the striking advance she has made in so short a time and may well place high hopes upon a people who have given proof of such exuberant and recuperative vitality.

The troubles under which Italy groans are of two-fold

nature, or rather the one is the result of the other. In a land for centuries broken up into petty states no sense of cohesion could exist. Provincialism is rampant and corrodes all the various sections of public life. But instead of taking into account these sectional differences and utilizing them as helpful factors, instead of keeping alive the autonomous character of these various provinces, the Italian statesmen who had made Italy looked around them for an example to copy for the framing of their administrative and executive power, and most unluckily hit upon France as their model. Now, France has for long been autonomous, her people love system and uniformity and are essentially logical. The keynote to the Italian character, on the other hand, is individualism, and all the past glories of the land, whether as cities, or petty states, sprang from that fact. Then, suddenly, without previous preparation or training, these were all squeezed into one mould.

Want of Cohesion.

The administrative system, for instance, included the institution in each government department of a Prefect, an anomalous and, to British ideas, most mischievous functionary who resides in the chief city of a province as the representative of the government, holding office during their pleasure and exercising a pressure and a surveillance on the local functionaries with whom he has nothing in common. Thus the cities at once come under a divided rule, that of the Municipality and that of the Prefect, often with unfortunate results. In the same way authority over the police is divided and there are two sorts, municipal and governmental, and these by no means work into each other's hands—often quite the contrary.

The Prefect and the Municipality.

But, while copying the French administrative arrangement, Italy, unfortunately, did not copy its tributary system of taxation. Instead, they took a little from this country, a little from that, with hopeless results; this is noteworthy in their

adoption of the English Income Tax, which is in no respects a toll suited to the Italian temperament. Long years of mis-rule and oppression have made the Italians secretive and mistrustful of all governments, the truth where it can be is carefully hidden, and the public treasury suffers. No Italian thinks it wrong to cheat the Government, quite the contrary.

Evils of Taxation.

"Fatta la legge, pensata la malizia," says a proverb, which means to all intents and purposes that when a law is made the means to circumvent it must also be provided. Nor is this to be wondered at when we learn that the Income Tax, for example, is most arbitrarily assessed, not on a man's income but according to its nature and source, varying from 10 to 20 per cent., and that even the pettiest salaries must contribute their quota. Land pays an exorbitantly high tax, from 30 to even 50 per cent., and consequently rarely yields more than 3 per cent. And almost worse than the taxes themselves is the way they are collected and assigned. The citizen is hampered and vexed at every point, all initiative is damped, industries are strangled while but half-fledged, and time, that precious commercial commodity, is wasted with a criminal disregard of the interests of others. To speak only of the most familiar, every-day matters, when I get the paper telling me that my house-taxes are due and what they amount to, I am not able, as in England, to pay the tax gatherer at the door and have done with it. I must go in person or send a servant between given hours to a given place. Even if my messenger arrives there two hours before the time assigned, a long *queue* is standing before the closed *guichet*. When that is opened each man in turn comes up, but as interminable sheets of writing must be filled and also much friendly conversation exchanged, it is highly probable that my messenger will return after some weary hours spent standing in a crowd to find that the office hours were over, and the *guichet* closed ere ever he could hand in his dole. No cheques are accepted in payment, the money may not be sent by postal order, but

must be paid cash down, and in person. As a facility it is permitted to pay the local taxes in five instalments, and Italians will five times a year submit uncomplainingly to this *corvée*. Needless to say, foreigners prefer to pay in the lump, to the constant amazement of the people, who always remark: "But if you should die before the year is out you will have made a present to the Government"; never comprehending that we foreigners would rather run that risk and give the Government a few needless pence than have our time wasted in this wise.

The fiscal policy of Italy also weighs heavily upon its hygiene. The heavy tax on salt, which is a Government monopoly, puts its use almost out of reach of the poorer class, and deprives the agriculturist of the power to give this most needful aliment to his beasts. And to such extremes is this salt monopoly carried that it is not possible when staying at the seaside to take home a bucket of sea-water in order to take a bath, except with a written permission from the authorities, to obtain which is, of course, a matter of time and expense. The Government is so afraid lest the people might, by evaporation, procure for themselves a little rough salt that even the loneliest bits of the coast are patrolled by finance officers. Here again, as in the case of the town octroi, one asks, Can it possibly pay?

The Salt Tax.

The tax on sugar, too, is an unfortunate one, especially nowadays that the nutritive value of sugar for the young is recognised. So dear is this commodity that it is a current Anglo-Italian joke to ask strangers whether they take their tea with or without "gold." But for this fiscal burden Italy might drive a thriving trade in jams and marmalades. Instead, the Italian fruit crops are exported to Switzerland, a land where sugar is cheap and which, therefore, reaps the profit. Yet another unwise restriction concerns tobacco. The preparation and sale of this is also a Government monopoly, consequently

Sugar and Tobacco.

though whole districts of the South are admirably suited for the cultivation of this plant it is strictly forbidden to grow it, and even in private gardens not more than three plants are allowed. And where it is grown, under Government supervision, every leaf is counted. Shops, usually small but very numerous, bearing the superscription "Sale, Tabacchi e Francobolli," (salt, tobacco, and stamps), are familiar features of Italian streets.

In these ways, by a short-sighted and narrow-minded fiscal policy, the Italian exchequer loses vast sums that it might gain. It is a constant cause of complaint that large sums are absorbed by the Army, and, indeed, this Army is one of the Socialist stalking horses. Yet in sober fact the absurd illogical fiscal system is far more costly and damaging to the finances of the land.

Effects of Fiscal Policy.

And this unwisdom goes through every branch of the Administration. This is the reason, for instance, that there are so few companies in Italy. Apart from the fact that the profound mutual mistrust which is so deep-rooted in the Italian character, makes them work badly together, it is not possible for companies to hide their profits; these must, of necessity, be made public, and it is too easy for the tax-gatherer to squeeze the life out of the enterprise before it has taken a fair hold. Such few companies as exist are apt to have their chief seat outside the confines, say at Lugano, which would be Italian except for a geographical accident. It is in ways such as these that the exchequer is circumvented.

Because of these same vexatious fiscal laws Italians often find it cheaper and simpler to let their capital lie idle than to employ it only to come in contact with these greedy vultures. That commerce and industry have of late years advanced by leaps and bounds in the face of these restrictions, shows how rich the land might be if a more modern, just and reasonable system of taxation were introduced.

Yet another irksome restriction is the requirement that

every trifling public document must be written on stamped paper of varying value and that only a small portion of the paper may be written on; each fresh sheet, of course, means new outlay, and a blot or an erasure invalidates the sheet. This same objection to erasures applies even to the common-place telegraph form. If you change your wording you must take a fresh form or initial the change. At every unexpected moment the public comes in contact with bureaucratic pedantry. Here, again, France and Germany have served as models. Foreigners are constantly coming into contact with these little vexations. If, for example, your purse is stolen or a cab knocks you down, you must state your name, your age, your address, your father's name, whether he be living or dead, and your mother's maiden cognomen, before the police can attend to your grievance. Yet, despite these passing absurdities, Italy is without exception the freest land on the Continent, and the one in which the ordinary foreigner comes least into contact with the police regulations, which render a sojourn in Germany, for example, so mixed a blessing.

Irksome Restrictions.

Industry is hampered by a tariff at the frontier. But these are not the only hindrances to free trade. The mediæval Octroi is still a living institution in Italy, confining the town barriers and closed gates. At each of these stand a small army of officials, local and governmental, who poke their fingers into every basket and bundle, harry the peasants and delay the traveller whether he walk or drive, or ride in tram or 'bus. If you live in a villa outside the gate and wish to take your table to be mended by the carpenter, you must pay duty on bringing in your own used property, or you must sign so many papers and go through so many formalities in order to get exemption that again you prefer to give the Government the few pence. For this Octroi tax really entails only pence. It weighs very gravely, nevertheless, upon the peasant who

The Octroi System.

brings in his market produce for sale and has perhaps to take it back unsold, and, of course, it raises the price of all comestibles. Everyone who can cheats the Octroi or helps others to cheat. No market woman in a tram with a basket full of, say, eggs or grapes will find any fine lady who refuses to let it stand under her skirts while the gate is passed and the Octroi men walk through the vehicle. It must surely cost the State more to keep up this staff of Custom officers at each town gate than they take in cash from this irksome impost. And in its incidence one comes in contact again with the curious pedantry that lurks in the Italian character. In vain, for instance, did a party of tourists who had bought a little bottle of Chartreuse outside the gates of Florence and incautiously held it in their laps offer to pay 50 c., even a franc rather than the 4 c. that proved to be the custom dues, provided they were not detained as they feared to lose their train. It was useless: the bottle had to be weighed, appraised, the endless papers had to be written out and signed and countersigned.

Unpractical Methods of Administration.

All this writing involves an enormous waste of time and energy in all departments of public life. Even at the railway the name of stations has constantly to be inserted in ink on the tickets, and as the box offices are not open all the time, like in practical Switzerland, but only a short time before the train is scheduled to start, the delay and confusion engendered is great. And, again, as blotting-paper is as yet a commodity unknown in Italian official life and all papers are sanded over, a further dawdle occurs in strewing this unwonted material over the written words and re-collecting it in the saucers.

This same curious want of practical ability in administrative matters makes itself felt in many spheres. It is the more curious that this should also exist in the domain of banking when we remember that it was Italians who, in the Middle Ages, were Europe's bankers, and that Italian banking terms

are still current the world over. Ink, paper and pens must really be a considerable item in Italian public expenditure.

Again, what precious time is wasted in the law courts from the fact that there is no such thing as an official stenographer. If you are called as a witness into an Italian court your exact words are not taken down, but the presiding magistrate dictates a synopsis of your statements to a scribe sitting beside him, who transcribes it with great deliberation. The consequence is that not your own words but the official's personal impression of your testimony is recorded, and what loophole this leaves for confusion and misapprehension need not be dwelt on.

All these flaws would, of course, have to be altered by law, and here, again, the obstructive element is the intense centralization. For, as the judicial and administrative life is bound up with the executive, and governments change with bewildering rapidity, there is continual vacillation and a want of firm ground in all departments, which is a grievous hindrance to the progress of the country, a source of grave weakness to public life.

All Italian public life has its outcome in Parliament. The deputies play a leading part in all work and initiative, and of every business arrangement, both legal and illegal. Yet despite this fact, Italian Parliamentary life is somewhat of a chaos. Political parties can hardly be said to exist, for the old well-marked parties who made United Italy are submerged and the modern divisions which take their place are not genuine parties but factions actuated by a selfish struggle for office, too often dominated by time-servers and place-hunters, among whom corruption is rife and rampant. Were we to judge of Italy from what we see from behind the scenes in the Chamber of Deputies our esteem for the land would be lowered. But, happily, the land is better than its Parliament, and its weaknesses are only too fully realized. The saying that every country has the government it deserves is only

Parliamentary Life.

applicable here in so far that the Italian is lazy about going to the polling booths and thus allows the wire pullers to obtain the upper hand and get their candidates returned.

Nor are Italians wholly to be blamed for this inertia. Elections are too apt to be manipulated by the Prefects put in on purpose and by others who wish to secure the return of the Government nominee, and it may lead to petty annoyances to oppose the dominant current. It is true that in private or in public, at cafés or in trains, Italians will talk endlessly upon public affairs and will curse and criticise their Government to any extent. But when it comes to going to the polling booths abstainers are but too numerous, and in all other ways, too, none lift a finger to remedy the defects they deplore. I except, of course, the Socialists, who comprehend the value of association, and it is herein that their strength resides.

Political Parties.

At first the Right and Left were well-marked parties somewhat corresponding to our Liberals and Conservatives, though these Conservatives would have been classed as Liberals in England, since the one really Conservative element, the Catholic, was excluded from voting by the Papal veto; this has been so ever since the Papacy refused to recognise the changed conditions and withdrew, like Achilles, with its henchmen from the fray. It was first Depretis, then Crispi who lowered the standard of Parliamentary morality, and when Crispi's "swelled head" finally brought disaster on the land this morality was so relaxed and the faith of the country in Parliamentary government so weakened that it was possible for him to be succeeded by the unscrupulous Giolitti, who was deeply involved in the bank scandals and an advocate of political corruption. He again was succeeded by others of more or less repute. For in Italy Ministries spring up like mushrooms and rise and fall, recompose and reconstruct themselves with such frequency that the whole system has got discredited, and it is often difficult to keep up with its vagaries. King Humbert, as I said before, was in a measure

to blame for this. His father had bequeathed him a far stronger kingdom than he passed on to his son. He was far too easy-going, too good-natured, and, what was worse, too much out of touch with his people, and surrounded by a system so hampered by red tape that he never had a chance of hearing the truth. Though a lion in courage physically, he was mentally timid, and was not fitted to clear out the Augean stable which his Parliament had created. Hence his death, deplorable as it was, permitted a thorough change of front.

The young King, like a clever surgeon, at once cut deep into the gangrene of decay. He who had hitherto been an unknown quantity, as to whose nature men who were not behind the scenes speculated vastly, showed a determination, a knowledge, an energy, and a rectitude that instantly commanded respect and attention.

Victor Emmanuel Gennaro, now King of Italy with the title of Victor Emmanuel III, was born at Naples on November 11th, 1869. His infancy was spent at Court, where he was brought up and educated under the immediate and intelligent supervision of his mother, Queen Margherita, one of the most cultured of Italy's noble ladies. He was trained from the first to love simplicity and virtue, and since he inherited much more of his grandfather's energetic and self-willed character than of the weak and too kindly temperament of his father, he showed, even from a child, that when it should be his turn to reign he would not prove to be the useless, dumb, and obsequious symbol of a particular form of political government, but would show himself a man before whose will the will of others would need to bend and if need be, break. Of his childhood various anecdotes are told, which, even when declared to be apocryphal, remain as proof that the people cared little for, and were distrustful of, the "little prince." In very deed, in some of these boyish escapades the man peeped through, and showed not only the outline, but almost the whole being of the man who, when he had scarcely

King Victor Emmanuel III.

ascended the throne, frankly forbade his Ministers to spend their evenings at the café or club, giving them to understand that since the work that is expected of them is great, they should not be able to find time to waste in such frivolous diversions. King Humbert, to whom the too haughty character of his son caused secret disquiet, often, perhaps with more frequency than justice, put the Prince of Naples under arrest. During these days of confinement the young man meditated deeply, pondered plans of campaign, and threw himself with ardour into the study of history, of which he has always been a profound and eager student. He also devoted even more attention to the acquisition of medals and coins, collected by him since his earliest boyhood, which has made of him one of the most expert numismatists in Europe. Meanwhile, between physical exercises and hard study, his mind and body acquired shape and strength; consequently, though neither tall and muscular like his father and grandfather, Victor Emmanuel III is robust like all his race. He can sit for hours in the saddle without feeling the least fatigue or discomfort; he can remain for long periods without taking food. It is true that his present good health and vigour were acquired by painful measures, and it is not unknown in Italy that the young prince might have become consumptive had not the King, his father, changed the severe curriculum of studies just in time, and given his son permission to travel, and leave his tutors and masters for months together. The voyages the young prince took during those years of ill-health, besides affording him a vast amount of information, by which he amply profited, completely restored his health, though he to this day has the outward appearance of frailty, and is undersized in stature.

It has been said that Victor Emmanuel III much resembles the German Emperor. A wide application must, in this case, be given to the word "resembles." Victor Emmanuel has revealed himself as a man of clear conceptions and iron will, but the Italian constitution does not afford

Photo by *Flli. D. Alessandri, Rome*

HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF ITALY

him the power of making and unmaking possessed by his august cousin, nor is it at all likely that he would wish to pose as a vice-God on earth.

A Comparison with the German Emperor.

In one phase of his character, but in only one, Victor Emmanuel truly seems to resemble William of Hohenzollern, and that is in his supreme strength of will. On ascending the throne, the first words he uttered were words that announced his firmness, words that caused hope to spring once more in the hearts of the Italian people.

In fact, the one thing which has struck all Italians is that Victor Emmanuel III has from the first shown himself intelligent. For some reason unexplained the people had grown to believe him a fool. The reason may be sought in the fact that he lived in much retirement and never caused the public to talk of him or of his deeds. In these days, when all the small fry of literature and art, and, still more, of politics, are ever trying to draw the eyes of the public upon themselves, and keep beating the big drum of self-advertisement, to let it be known that they also exist in the world, this young man, who might easily have won applause, playing as he did one of the chief *rôles* in the comedy of life, persisted in remaining behind the scenes, occupied in his private studies, and in the latter years absorbed in the love of his young and beautiful wife.

Life as Crown Prince.

In Italy, where all know that Queen Margherita exerted as much influence on the Government as King Humbert himself—an influence, however, not applied with a proper knowledge of social conditions—it seemed strange that the Crown Prince should take so little interest in public affairs as to allow the King's weakness and the incapacity and stupidity of his Ministers to endanger and compromise his crown. No explanation of this phenomenon was forthcoming, except by concluding that the Prince was an imbecile. It is true that when the ambitious improvidence of Francesco Crispi led the Italian soldiery under the orders of General

Baratieri to the dire defeat of "Abba Carima," Prince Victor Emmanuel, in the presence of the King, his father, burst into vehement abuse of the hapless Minister, reproaching him with the defeat, and at the same time cast in his face the other senseless and ugly deeds performed by his political allies. But as the King, after the outburst, once more consigned his son to arrest, the Prince speedily re-entered the shadow from which he had but an instant emerged at a moment of overwhelming disgust, and once more he seemed to exist for nothing else than his studies, his travels, his numismatic collection. He thus furnished a noble example of a respectful son, loving his father more than the throne which might one day be his. He also at the same time took the stand of a man who intended to keep his hands free to act in his own way on the day when he should be called by the course of events to rule over Italy. And, in fact, when the tragedy of Monza forced him to take up his father's burden, his first words were those of a man not bound by the past, of a man who would and could renew the sorely shaken structure of Italian political life.

Character as King.

Victor Emmanuel III's first words inspired the confidence that he could and would take as monarch the place he must occupy if Italian monarchy was to be saved from the breakers of civil war. A thorough and intelligent study of social science has made of this young man a king ripe to govern new generations in this new age. He is not burdened with antiquated notions which see ruin in every reform, or an enemy of public institutions in every friend of new social and political theories. As a soldier and head of the Army he feels the imperious necessity of maintaining it as a sound, strong and faithful defender of the public institutions and of the fatherland. But as a citizen and head of his subjects he also understands their urgent needs, and feels that scope must be given to new energy, and to fresh social arrangements, by means of speedy reforms, which shall be logical, and prudent, and yet profound, and

set a limit to the overwhelming fury of the extreme parties, which would drag the country into desperate struggles, fruitless of result, and fatal to all prosperity. The King never passes a day without reading the papers of the Extreme parties' factions, often making notes and comments with his own hand. In the same way he occupies himself with everything that emanates from the groups of the Parliamentary Opposition. An indefatigable worker, he has insisted, to the no small amazement and consternation of his subordinates, from the first day of his power, that all decrees that require his signature shall be presented to him at least three days beforehand, in order that he may supervise, study and control everything before giving to any act, even the most insignificant, the sanction of his approval and sign manual.

Accustomed from childhood to search out for himself the truth of things, as soon as he ascended the throne he desired to see how the directors of charitable institutions fulfilled their trusts, and during his retired stay in Naples during the first weeks of mourning, some deeds are quoted which well reveal his character, showing that he knows both how to punish and reward those who harm or those who benefit his country. Here are the facts.

His Care for the People.

One morning he arrived very early and very unexpectedly at one of the principal hospitals of Naples. He entered, passed through the passages, visited the dispensing room, the consulting office, the kitchen, and in fact inspected the whole establishment. Finding it was not attended to as it should be, he used harsh words to the director. "The poor are not to be treated thus." The director endeavoured to make excuses and defend himself. Victor Emmanuel looked at him, said nothing, and went out. "His silence," said a spectator, "was harsher than his words." Another day he descended unexpectedly among the palace guards. He inspected their quarters, visited the soldiers, tasted their food, and praised their good order. He evinced his satisfaction

and let it be known to the person responsible that he might be proud of such well-merited praise. On another occasion a courageous and intelligent railway pointsman saved from certain disaster a train just entering a station. The railway company gave the man a niggardly reward. The King, unable to make the company understand in any other way the meanness of their behaviour, himself sent to the pointsman a sum much larger than that presented by the company. The railway company then tried to remedy the matter, but it was too late, and they were put to shame. Some time ago the King appeared in his favourite unexpected way in a dockyard. He questioned the workmen, visited a ship in the course of construction, took accurate note of everything noteworthy that presented itself, and praised and blamed where praise and blame seemed merited. This, in short, is one of the ways in which Victor Emmanuel interprets his kingly mission.

His Lofty Conception of Duty.

And since truly in Italy there is much to blame, and since no words are so efficacious as the words of the King, the people who know this perceive at last that their sovereign is not what they had taken him for during the long years of retirement and oblivion. Hence Italy as a nation has fixed her last and greatest hope upon him, and he in turn has already inspired his people with respect and esteem. An upright man, with a lofty conception of the duties imposed by a throne, he wishes all other men to do their duty, from the highest to the lowest, in all spheres of government, in all classes, in all groups and associations of the nation.

"In Italy," he said in one of his first speeches, "no man does his duty. From the highest to the lowest the *laissez faire* and laxity are complete. Now it is to the accomplishment of their several duties that all without distinction must be called. I begin with myself, and am trying to do my duty conscientiously and with love. This must serve as an example and a spur to others. My Ministers must help me

in everything. They must not promise except that which they can certainly maintain; they must not create illusions. Whoever fulfils his duty, braving every danger, even death, I shall consider the best citizen." (Severe words these, but, unfortunately, not unmerited.) Victor Emmanuel has long been accustomed to do his duty. Just as he knew and understood his obligations as Crown Prince, as subject, as son, and scrupulously performed them, so now as King he knows how much weightier these duties are, but has determined to accomplish them all. He wishes to know everything that occurs in his realm; he wishes to discuss everything with his Ministers, and this because he intends to give to all the acts of his reign his personal impress, so that Italy may through his example and his decision and purpose hold once more the high place among the nations to which she is entitled by her historic past. And, fortunately, he is well supported in his home. There is probably not a more happily married man in all Europe than the King of Italy, a man who cares more sincerely for a quiet, domestic life, and who is blessed in his wife and his three bonnie babes, the youngest of whom to the joy of the nation is a boy—Prince Humbert of Piedmont, as he is styled to recall the name and title borne by his grandfather.

Queen Elena.

It may be said in a sense that Queen Elena was not born in the purple, and indeed when the Prince of Naples' determined choice was first known, some few aristocrats, including the Duchess of Aosta, whose husband was Heir Presumptive, failing issue from the Prince of Naples, made some caustic references to her relatively humble origin. For the little mountain principality of Montenegro is ruled over by a descendant of one of those mountain chiefs who distinguished himself in the constant warfare waged by this Highland people against their traditional and life-long enemies—the Turks. A rude, simple, stony land, where patriarchal manners and customs still obtain, the Princess had been inured to a plain, homely

existence since her childhood, and though part of her education was given to her outside the rocky fastnesses of her home and amid Russian Court circles, as she had been destined for the Czar, she nevertheless had acquired all the civic virtues that distinguish her family. A fine musician on the violin, a lover of art and poetry, she writes a little herself in her native Servian tongue. A good walker, rider, and sportswoman, tall, and physically strong, she reveals in every action and movement her chaste, proud, mountain ancestry. The couple met first at the Venice Exhibition of 1895, and at once the Prince of Naples determined that Elena of Montenegro should be his bride. When opposition was made by Crispi for political reasons, he told his parents that if he did not marry Elena he would marry no other princess. Fortunately, King Humbert overbore the Minister's objections by declaring that he approved of the choice and that the Princess was the descendant of a brave race that had fought for liberty. "The house of Montenegro," he said, "like my own house, is synonymous with liberty."

In October, 1896, the marriage was solemnized in Rome after the Princess had formally abjured the Greek Catholic faith in favour of the Roman Catholic form. Since that time she has been her husband's right hand and comfort. But all she does is done quietly, unobtrusively. Both husband and wife avoid all show and pomp whenever this is possible. Indeed, Italians complain that they lead too quiet and retired a life, and do not receive or show themselves enough. When passing through a city they continually request that the money that would have been spent in entertaining them should be given to the poor instead. For their charity is boundless. Indeed, the Queen's chief interest, outside of her family, is centred in the amelioration of the condition of the people, and especially in schools and charities for children. Like the King, she is an enthusiastic motorist, and in this way they are often able to appear unexpectedly in distant places

Photo by *Guigoni & Bossi, Milan*

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN WITH THE PRINCESSES

and to see with their own eyes whether matters are properly conducted.

Were the King but an autocrat, as even the most Liberal cannot help wishing at times, how much faster reforms might be effected! In that case Italy would attain more speedily to that high place among the nations to which she is inevitably tending. But he has to reckon with and to work with the Chamber.

The Italian Parliament.

The Italian Parliament consists of two Chambers, an Upper and a Lower House; the former is styled the Senate, the latter the House of Deputies. The number of Senators is unlimited and they are nominated by the King for life. They are chosen from men distinguished for State and other services, men who pay over 3,000 lire annually in taxes, and men who have three times been elected Deputies. They receive no salary, they meet rarely, and it may frankly be stated that their influence is slight. The House of Deputies, or the Chamber, as it is more commonly called, consists of 508 members, whose only qualification is that they must be Italian subjects and not less than thirty years of age. They, too, are unpaid, but, like the Senators, enjoy the privilege of free passes on all the trains and steamers of the realm. When elected, a deputy is given a gold medal about the size of a sovereign which he generally wears on his watch chain, and this serves as his pass. Each Parliament is supposed to last five years, but rarely attains that age. Every male subject who can read and write and pays 20 francs in direct taxation is qualified as an elector. The Kingdom is divided into electoral districts. The official expenses are paid by the Commune, but the personal by the candidate himself. Bribery is forbidden by law, but occurs nevertheless in various forms. It does not, however, attain to such proportions as in England before the days of the Reform Bill of 1832. It is needful to remember this ere casting the Pharisaical stone.

A very unfortunate institution, also copied from France,

is the second ballot, which results in putting great power into the hands of the minority, as owing to it they can dispose of their votes to whichever party they please. This puerile, but in its effects most mischievous, invention is based upon the theory that it does not suffice for a man to have the largest number of votes but he must have a number equal to the half as much again as have been cast for his adversary. If this is not attained, a fresh election must take place. This not only prolongs the electoral agitation and disturbs the land, but opens the door for a number of undesirable expedients in order to obtain the missing votes. It was to this practice of a second ballot that Emile Ollivier attributed the rapid downfall of the Third Empire.

The Second Ballot.

The Deputy elected, he takes his seat at Montecitorio, a seventeenth-century palace built by Bernini for the Ludovisi family and once the headquarters of the Papal Law Courts. Its semi-circular inner courtyard has been converted into the auditorium and is only a wooden erection. Again and again has it been pronounced unsafe, and the project ventilated of erecting a building specially designed to meet modern requirements. The seats are arranged in fan shape, as in an antique theatre, flights of steps breaking the sections into divisions. Each member has his own place with a desk in front in which he can keep his papers; this seat he retains during the whole life of the Parliament for which he is elected. As plans of the House can be bought, a stranger can thus at once ascertain the name of a member. The President who is elected by the House for one session only, holds a purely honorary office and receives no salary, neither has he any robes of office. When he wants to call the House to order he rings a small hand-bell, but if a tumult of Southern words is raging his efforts in this respect are often ludicrously ineffectual. He sits in the centre of a slightly raised platform, and just below level with the floor, sit the Ministers in gilt armchairs before

The House of Deputies.

Photo by *Chas. Abéniacar, Naples*

EXTERIOR OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

a long table. The general public are admitted to the various Tribunes that run round the semi-circular space. That reserved for ladies is not screened off as in our own House of Commons. The House meets daily at 2 p.m., and usually rises at 6.30, but it may sit as late as 10 p.m. If business is pressing it may even sit on Sundays. When a session opens the members are sworn in in a body. The President reads the oath, "I swear to be faithful to the King and to be faithful to all the laws of the State for the good of the King and the country," and the members answer "I swear." An easy and friendly tone obtains among the Deputies. They call each other "Tu" (Thou), always a sign of intimacy in Italy, even if they are strangers, as though to mark their solidarity. They are constantly on the move in the body of the House, talking with friends and foes. Still, despite all this friendly intercourse great attention is paid to outer forms. Onorevole (Honourable) is always prefixed to their names in public address, even when such scenes are raging as unfortunately at times disgrace Continental Parliaments. No time-limit is placed upon the speeches of members. If a speaker be a favourite he is generally surrounded by friends and admirers who interrupt his words with their applause.

Class of Representatives.

It is most unfortunate that the Italian Parliament is largely recruited from among lawyers and professional men and that there is such a marked absence of merchants, manufacturers, and even of landed proprietors. Even the working class send lawyers as their representatives. And since these men love to hear themselves talk and are rhetoricians by nature and training, much valuable time is wasted in mere words spoken to impress those at a distance, and practical matters are neglected or but indifferently understood by these men of the pen and the office. Indeed, a member is often chosen because of his fluent speech and brilliant phrases, no matter how empty of ideas, rather than for his programme. Italians, like all Latins, are enamoured of words for their own sake. The

cause for this may, however, be sought in their innate artistic and aesthetic sense and their fundamental idealism. Even were these men more practical, the proverbially short ministerial life hinders great political and social projects from being studied and carried into effect. Both Ministers and Deputies dissipate too much of their force in forming little intriguing coteries. An ex-Minister once said that Italian Ministers were condemned like acrobats to spend their strength in keeping their balance "on the tight rope," and hence lost their sense of freedom of motion for a more energetic and wider outlook. Party feeling over-rides patriotism, as is so often the case in Parliamentary countries, an evil which, according to Lord Rosebery, is growing in England. Intrigues and cabals to get one man in rather than another, a motion excluded or accepted, obscure the political sense of the members, and a lofty, disinterested patriotism, like that of the Japanese, becomes a rarity.

Coteries and Cabals.

And yet it was just the Italians who, at the time of their Risorgimento, possessed it in an eminent degree. It is a pity that for a while it seems to be engulfed in the party spirit. But political genius is not dead in Italy; it is only temporarily overlaid.

And yet, paradoxical though it may sound, while condemning party feeling, one would like to see more of it in Italy, but of a healthier kind; for party here so far rather means cliques and factions. The people have not yet properly grasped that constitutional government means party government, and that if there were organised parties in the land Parliament would be organised of its own accord, and would be liberated from the petty groups that compose it, and, united by no other ties but those of self-interest or friendship, are for ever dancing a *chassez croisez* hither and thither without higher purpose or aim.

It is the Socialists, despite their impracticable Utopian doctrines, who have shown themselves of late years the

Photo by *Chas. Abéniacar, Naples*

INTERIOR OF THE ITALIAN PARLIAMENT

purest and most upright section of Italian politicians. To their influence and to the fact that they and they alone understand the value of organisation, is it due that parties are slowly beginning to harden into more shape and are no longer quite so gelatinous. It is possible, too, that now since the advent of an enlightened and tolerant Pope, the prohibition to Catholics to vote for the Parliament of the Usurper, as Pius IX described the King of Italy, will be removed and so a healthy Conservative party will be formed that will act as a wholesome brake upon theorists and *doctrinaires* and encourage the formation of a real Liberal party, such as Italy had of old; these large divisions would then act and interact for the good of the whole country, which should after all be the ultimate aim of all party struggles. This ultimate aim had of recent years been entirely overlooked, and hence the people came to believe that there was an intimate and insoluble connection between politicians and speculators, both bent on exploiting the country, and both often expecting some return from the Government for doing some of its work and that not always of the highest nature. The return in question may be only a ribbon or a title. Victor Emmanuel II used to say "A cavalier's cross or a cigar is a thing one can refuse to no one." Indeed, an ex-Premier once remarked that "Italy is governed by decorations." Knights and Knight-Commanders (Cavalieri and Commendatori) are as plentiful as blackberries, and the titles have ceased to be a distinction. "The organisation of the Italian State," says a poignant Italian critic, "is one great clientèle and the peasants get no help because they are not part of the clientèle."

The Aims of Parties.

"A Deputy," said one, in speaking of his mandate, "has to find posts for people, secure verdicts for his supporters, alike in civil and criminal cases, help others to pass their examination or get pensions, promote or oppose public or private contracts, get convicts released, civil servants punished or removed, obtain roads and bridges for his constituency."

No wonder that yet another Deputy said in open Chamber that the Government was the spring and source of all the corruption of the land.

Of course, we must not take all this too literally. Italians, like Englishmen, are given to sharp self-criticism. Corruption is an evil plant that does not flourish only on Italian soil. For an example we need only look across the Atlantic at the United States where things are done on a scale that puts all other nations to the blush. But the better-thinking Italians resent that their land, united at such cost of tears and blood and sacrifice, should fall the victim of exploiters and sink into the noisome slough. And this is the reason why so many of the best join the Socialist ranks; for the Socialists have shown themselves fearless in exposing some of the worst scandals and many of their proposed economic reforms are admirable and necessary. So far, too, there have been few time-servers in their ranks. Turati, their leader, whose organ is the *Critica Sociale*, is a man of high character. Enrico Ferri, too, madcap though he be, a political Don Quixote, who sometimes runs up against wind-mills, is irreproachable in all respects, and the same applies to Pantaleoni, to Colajanni, and others. Owing to confusion and anomaly among the old parties, the Socialists, by a curious accident, have become the upholders of constitutional right. The *Critica Sociale*, wrote a keen political observer, "has endowed almost all of us with a social conscience." For it is quite true, as a member of the Chamber has admitted, that "it is the Socialists who have forced Parliament and the country to attend to princ ples and to forget personalities." No wonder that many persons hold that the future of Italian Parliamentary life lies with the Socialists.

The Socialists.

The only other coherent and compact party which understands the value of combination is that of the Clericals, whose influence so far is negative but who, like the Socialists, are the foes of the existent state of things. It is much to be

hoped that the new Pope's truly liberal patriotism will put a stop to the anomaly of a clergy openly opposing the State and the Sovereign.

The office of a Deputy, despite its privileges, is no bed of roses. It is apt, indeed, to become an agency for the satisfaction of the local interests and private affairs of the various voters in his district. Of this I once had ocular proof, nor do I think had I not seen it I could have credited what proportions are assumed by this abuse. It happened that on the occasion of an opening of Parliament by King Humbert I was invited to attend, and a Deputy friend, to avoid the crush, indicated to me a back door beside which at a given hour I should find him waiting. I arrived in due time before what I thought the right door, and waited and waited. The time passed by. I heard the trumpet blowing the Royal fanfare. I realized the King had entered the House, and still no Deputy. So I ventured to open the door. Inside I found a most motley crowd, men and women, old and young, children, and even priests. After a time I noticed that each sent word by an usher that they wished to see the Onorevole So-and-So, who after a while either promptly appeared, or sent some message that seemed to satisfy the applicant. I grew amused and watched on. The opening of Parliament I could imagine. This I could not. After a time I realized what was going on around me. Here were the clients of old Rome who followed the patricians in a changed garb, but with unchanged demands. And what demands? Impossible to imagine them, so naïve were some, of such colossal impudence were others. One old woman asked that her Deputy should let her son off his examinations, another asked that a schoolmistress should be transferred or dismissed, as she was not kind to her child. The applicants for bureaucratic posts, no matter how small, were countless. When I had had enough I thought I would try the trick myself. I called for my Deputy friend and promptly did he appear. It was all a misunderstanding. I

The Office of Deputy.

had mistaken the door. But his vexation that I should have seen thus behind the scenes was great. He need not have been so distressed. It was easy enough for me to grasp that the cause for all this must be sought in the imperfect political education of the people and that most of these demands, at least the most puerile, came either from the still backward south or from simple country folk—although truth compels me to state that all Italians, no matter of what class, still look upon the State as a good milch cow, who must render them some return for the money spent in taxes or for the material sacrifices endured for the sake of Unity.

Institutions are reformed from within, not from without. When the Italian citizen is better educated politically, then the Parliament, too, will take higher rank. Italy will then return to her own highest level and the sons who have proved so little worthy of their fathers who made the land will be avenged in their grandsons. Upon its oncoming younger generation Italy can look with pride and confidence. "Time," says an Italian proverb, "is a perfect gentleman," and many of the defects we deplore can and will yield to his pressure.

CHAPTER II

THE PRESS

THE moods of a nation are revealed more fully in its newspapers than in its literature. This is as true of Italy as of any other land. If the Fourth Estate, as regards its human representatives, is not the power in Italy that it is in France or in England, its products are nevertheless of wide and far-reaching influence. Further, there does not exist in Italy a "reptile press" such as was the shameful outcome of Prince Bismarck's influence upon German journalism. The Italians are a great newspaper-reading population. A proof of this can be seen, for example, any evening at the cafés, or even in the theatres during the entr'actes, when the papers are hawked for sale and eagerly purchased. For in Italy, almost without exception, our ordinary custom is reversed, and newspapers are published late in the afternoon or evening. The streets of the larger cities between 8 and 10 at night resound with the shouts of third editions, some of these of papers that would seem never to have had a first or second issue. To observe the excited demeanour of the vendors one would imagine that events of world-shaking import had occurred. More probably it is nothing else but a murder or, better still, an emotional drama, that so agitates this rushing, hurrying mob who fall over one another as they rush out of the newspaper offices where they have received the journals fresh and damp from the press, or from the railway stations where they have arrived by train, carried by a special arrangement with the company as what is called *fuori sacco* (outside of the mail bags), and ready done up into packets to distribute to the various newsagents. Indeed, the whole affair is managed with a lightning rapidity, such as is not usually displayed with things Italian. More amusing

The Italians as Newspaper Readers.

even than in the large centres is the spectacle a small place presents on the arrival of the newspaper train or boat. The whole population seems to gravitate towards the platform or the pier, and hardly have the parcels been dealt out than every man's face is hidden by a printed sheet. The Italians, like the Athenians of old, are lovers of the news. As a proof I may mention that Italy takes the fourth place in Europe in the number of its newspapers. It boasts of 1,400, of which 170 are dailies.

Characteristics of Italian Journals.

And of what nature are these Italian journals? The English tourist, accustomed to his native Brobdignagian broadsheets, is apt contemptuously to dismiss them as "halfpenny rags that contain no news." They make a great mistake. It is true that these papers without exception only cost five centimes (one halfpenny); it is true that as a rule they consist of only one sheet of which the whole last page is usually devoted to advertisements; nevertheless they are, taken as a whole, far from despicable, and some are of really remarkable merit and high literary standard. They may enjoy printing highly coloured accounts of crimes with great copiousness of detail; on the other hand, they never debase themselves to manufacture in their offices news calculated to disturb the world's peace. Italy is not a rich country, the science of advertisement is still ill-understood and in its infancy, hence the papers cannot afford to be larger in volume; but if they give less in bulk than the English and American Gazettes, what they do give is by no means always worthless. Italy can boast of some papers whose leaders even that *magno organo*, the *Times*, does not disdain to quote.

The Political Press.

Naturally and necessarily political journals of real importance can only live in the great centres of Rome and Milan—in Rome because it is the political capital, in Milan because it is the industrial centre of the land. Before 1870 when Rome was taken over by the Italians only three newspapers were

published there and these were all clerical and organs of the Vatican. Only one has survived the *Osservatore Romano*, which exists in order to promulgate Vatican decrees and to break lances with the papers of the new régime, such as the Roman papers, the *Tribuna*, the *Giornale d'Italia*, the *Patria*, or that mouthpiece of the Italian proletariat, the *Avanti*. The *Tribuna* is usually Ministerial, whatever Ministry happens to be in office, and as Ministries succeed one another with great rapidity in Italy, its colour is somewhat of the chameleon character. It is usually extremely well-informed as to foreign affairs, and has some excellent correspondents and contributors. The *Giornale d'Italia*, a late comer in the field, is politically rather of a Liberal-Conservative nature. Its chief attraction, however, consists in the literary and scientific articles, one of which is published almost daily and which take a wide range over all departments of human thought and activity. There is a charm, a freshness, a modern agility about the journal that has assured it an instant success. The *Avanti*, the organ of the Socialists, is maintained by the clever device of a permanent subscription fund, to which the smallest contributions are welcome. Thus the members of the party, who, like Socialists all the world over, are well organised and compact, on happy or sad occasions send some lires or centimes to this fund as their obol with remarks such as "In memory of my dear defunct brother and comrade XX," or "The result of a bet among companions," or "As a cry of protest," or "To attest to our solidarity," and what not beside. This journal, of which the hot-headed but able scientist, Enrico Ferri, is one of the editors, is continually being suppressed for a couple of days, but it reissues as sprightly and combative as ever. Whatever occurs of evil in the world—strikes, insurrections, revolutions and such like, finds its repercussion in the office of the *Avanti*. Instantly the police appears at its door some "comrades" are put into preventive confinement, fines are imposed, and the circulation for the day is perhaps suspended. For

though a large measure of freedom of the Press exists, such as was unknown under the sway of Popes and Grand Dukes and petty sovereigns, still a certain police supervision of newspapers continues, and a journal can be suppressed or suspended by order of the Prefects, though by a recent law it can no longer be sequestrated. This is really a somewhat clumsy and antiquated proceeding which usually defeats its own purpose, as in these days of rapid printing and diffusion a large number of copies have generally gone forth ere the police order arrives for their suppression. It is this anomalous state of things that has created a curious figure of Italian newspaper life, the *gerente responsabile*. This is a man of straw, more often than not an illiterate person, whose name is appended at the foot of the newspaper as the responsible authority. If the paper is sued it is he who has to appear, not the editor or the writer of the incriminated article, and if there is any imprisonment to sit out it is he who goes into goal. As a rule a *gerente responsabile* is paid so much a day when he does not go to prison; if he goes there he lives at the expense of the State. This is certainly one way and an original one of earning a livelihood. In the *Avanti* this post is no sinecure. In high-class papers, such as, for example, the *Corriere della Sera*, the *gerente* never has to sit out a term of punishment and the post is greatly coveted. The *Corriere della Sera*, a Milanese paper, is about the best in Italy. It is committed to no political party, is absolutely independent, and has never accepted a Government subsidy or a bribe. It numbers among its writers senators, deputies, scientists and literati and it has excellent correspondents in the various European capitals. Its war correspondents, A. Rossi and L. Barzini, are unequalled and unrivalled for quickness of observation (an Italian gift) and graphic presentation. Indeed, Barzini could make many a special correspondent look to his laurels. Thus, thanks to his smartness and pliability of circumstances,

Police Supervision of Newspapers.

An Independent Newspaper.

he was, with the exception of Reuter's representative, the only journalist present at the historic and notable battle of Mukden in the late Russo-Japanese War.

Another Milanese paper which, like the *Corriere della Sera*, circulates through the whole of the land, is the *Secolo*, the organ of the Radical party. Its general tone and literary merits are not up to the level of the *Corriere della Sera*, but it deserves mention for its persistent upholding of the standard of international peace.

Provincial Newspapers.

There are other local papers, too, which are meritorious, such as the *Resto del Carlino* of Bologna, the *Giornale di Sicilia* of Palermo, the *Gazetta di Venezia* of Venice, but it would be tedious to enumerate their mere titles. Every city, too, possesses a local paper of a certain sensational stamp, of which the *Messaggero* of Rome is a typical example. This paper has been called "the official organ of the murdered, the throttled and the suicides." It is always well served with information of this kind, since it gives fifty centimes, after verification, to the person who first brings it such ghastly news. Hence it is not uncommon in the streets of Rome if people see a crowd before a house or an excitement in the road for them to pass by without asking its cause. "No matter," they will say, "we shall read it all later in the *Messaggero*." For specially sensational crimes extra editions are issued and greedily devoured. The reporting of such items is done in a manner that is peculiar to Italy, flowery, detailed, minute. And this applies to all papers, even to the best, though the *Messaggero* carries off the palm in this line. I can best give my readers an idea of how it is done by printing an Italian skit on the subject, a skit which, incredible as it may appear, is really hardly exaggerated.

"Yesterday at 4·7 seconds the cry of an elderly woman was heard issuing from the house no. 526 of the alley del Mancino, and to be precise, from that third window of the second floor that has sun blinds and was repainted in dark green

a few days ago by Tobias Castracani, who has a wife, Ersilia, who is a shirtmaker in via del Burro no. 440, and a son Alberto, who is in the second elementary class in via del Priorato, a school ably directed by Professor Alessandro Maccheroni, who studied in Florence, and whose old mother, Maria Maccheroni Conditi, still lives with a brother who studies architecture, aged 26, tall, fair-moustached, and having a wart on his left cheek, rather nearer the nose than the eye.

The Reporting Style.

"Hurriedly we ascended the steps of which there were fifty-six, and very badly kept, and indeed we are surprised that the landlord, Baron Bartolomeo Colleffe, who is still young, does not have them attended to; it seems to be also the fault of his steward, Aristide Camorrini, who lives in via della Polveriera, letter Z, with an unmarried sister, but who two years ago was engaged to Terenzio Alchermese, living in via della Statuto no. 501, with his brothers Amedeo, Bertoldo, Tommaso, nicknamed the Moor, and his sisters Cammilla and Gertrudea, a fine tall girl, and Teresa," and so forth and so on.

In such reporting there comes out the curious pedantic strain that is a notable characteristic of the Italian character, and seems to harmonize so ill with their quickness of wit and rapidity of observation. It is this that makes them so fond of those purely academic discussions that also find an echo in their papers, and gives a peculiar tone to their criticism, even if the wording, the superlatives and the richly coloured adjectives makes it sound redundant to English ears. For in spite of these defects, the standard of literary and dramatic criticism is really elevated, approaching rather the French than the English model. The political leaders, too, are often excellent—well-argued, well-studied, well-informed, of breadth of statesmanship and vision and, curiously enough in this domain, of terseness of expression. Many an Italian journalist has passed from the newspaper office to a Deputy's seat in the Chamber, and even to the armchair of a Minister.

High Level of Criticism.

Neither journalism nor *belles lettres* are lucrative professions in Italy. Everything of a literary nature is most inadequately remunerated. Thus, an Italian novel rarely sells more, if as much as, three thousand copies, of which the net profit is perhaps 1,000 francs (£40) if it be by a popular author. The same applies to journalism. The men who embrace this profession really do so for love, and many do so love it. The Italian likes to express his exuberance of thought by word and by pen.

The Associated Press of Italy.

But were other proof required that the Fourth Estate has come to take its place in Italy also, this would be furnished by the sumptuous quarters owned by the Associated Press of Italy in the Piazza Colonna of Rome. Membership to this costs twenty-four francs a year, and election is by ballot under certain professional restrictions. A member is entitled to various privileges; beside the use of this building as a club-house or a resort, he gets reduction at specified shops, there are a number of doctors and lawyers who serve him gratis, there is an Old Age or Accident Pension Fund, and, further, the State concedes him annually a liberal number of journeys upon the railways or the State steamers at 50 per cent. reduction. In the Palace, that is the headquarters of this trades' union, are fine reception rooms, reading rooms in which papers from all parts of the globe can be perused, and a good reference library. Strangers passing through Rome easily secure the privilege of a temporary membership, for the Associated Press desires above all to be friendly and cosmopolitan in tone. Its President is usually a man notable in journalism or politics.

Altogether Rome is the best place in which to realise what a privileged position has been obtained by the Italian Press.

Privileges of the Press.

For them is reserved the best gallery in Parliament, where the inmates will often talk and dispute so loudly that the President of the Chamber cannot fail to hear, and not infrequently he will even reply to remarks he cannot pretend to be inaudible,

with some witty word or pacificatory joke. In this newspaper tribune sits one lady, Signora Maria Calvini, though the female journalist is still a rare apparition in Italy. She is a militant Socialist, who writes reports of the Chamber, and also lectures to propagate feminine emancipation. Her special mission concerns the protection and legal rights of women and children, which in Italy are still in a somewhat primitive condition; for example, no married woman can draw or sign a cheque on her own account, even if the money be her own. Her evidence is not accepted in a law court without her husband, and other mediæval restrictions of the same kind. At Aragno's, the most chic café in Rome, which is close to the Chamber, the Associated Press Palace, the Post and the Telegraph, the table reserved to the pressmen is noticeable for the loud excited talk of those who sit at it, drowning that of all the other guests. The Press is clearly privileged, and no consideration seems to be expected from it. At the Telegraph and Post Office the Government has put aside a special room, for the convenience of journalists where they can write and wire at their ease and which furnishes them with a species of club.

Benefits to Subscribers.

Families and householders as a rule subscribe for their daily papers. Such subscriptions cost less than buying the paper separately, despite the fact that in that case they are sent through the Post; for the Post, by a special arrangement with the papers, carries their matter at a cost that is infinitesimal. Indeed, dear though letter postage still is in Italy, the postage for all printed matter is very trifling and far cheaper than in England. Moreover Italy has other postal arrangements that England could copy with advantage, such as the convenient method of money-order cards and the cash-on-delivery system. To subscribers the newspapers offer every New Year a gift that may consist of a book, a picture, a piece of furniture, a case of liqueurs. It is difficult to understand how with their cheap subscriptions they can make this pay. No births or marriages

PIAZZA COLONNA

SHOWING PREMISES OF THE PRESS ASSOCIATION'S CENTRAL OFFICE

are announced in the Italian papers, only deaths. The sanctity of the home is jealously respected. Hence we meet with no interviews except such as concern politics, no man's house is described, no society ladies figure, there is no lifting of the veils of privacy. An Italian would be pained and scandalized if the picture of his wife or mother or sister occupied a full page in a public journal.

Press Agencies.

The Agenzia Stefani is the Reuter of Italy. No newspaper has wires of its own because the Government exercises a censorship over all news. For the same cause, too, obstacles are put in the way of telephonic extensions and the officials of the Ministry of the Interior have the right of listening to telephonic conversations whenever they deem it advisable. Some of the larger papers have now instituted telephonic communication with Paris and get their news in this way. This includes extracts from the English papers, especially from the *Times*, so that the evening editions will bring all the latest information published by the French and English Press that morning. It is interesting to note the difference of outlook assumed by certain questions from the difference of geographical position from that of England. Noticeable, too, is the circumstance that far less interest is shown in sport or in mere money-making.

Humorous and Literary Journals.

Comic papers corresponding to our aristocratic *Punch* Italy has none. She has some humorous sheets and exceedingly witty they are at times, but refinement is not their distinguishing feature, and they are rarely fit to be seen in a lady's drawing-room. Indeed, Italian caricature has only quite recently been lifted, by means of men like Sacchetti, Pappiello, Galantara, and others, to the rank of an art. Sacchetti's pencil has passed in review all the artistic and literary personalities of the day, hitting off their personality and salient characteristics with a few bold, happy strokes. Political caricature is the speciality of the socialist artist,

Galantara, who, in the anti-clerical sheet *L'Asino* passes before the public a procession of smug burghers and fat clerics, who, if they become at last somewhat monotonous, yet reveal his capacity as a powerful draughtsman. Among other Italian satirical papers I may name the *Pasquino* of Turin, the *Fischietto* of Rome, the *Travaso*, and the *Guerin Meschino*. In weekly literary journals, too, she is poor, though every year sees the rise and also the fall of some ephemeral sheets. It is a little mania just now, a form of sport among a section of the youngest men, to think they must found a newspaper to propagate and propound some little individual differences of thought or taste. Short-lived though these papers are as a rule, they are often by no means despicable, and contain the fresh, ardent aspirations of many a thoughtful youth. It is between the ages of 18 and 22 that this form of sport manifests itself most frequently, for Italian young men mature faster than their English compeers. Of such sheets a permanent place has been secured by the Florentine *Marzocco*, founded by a group of d'Annunzio enthusiasts, and still the organ of the younger generation that here ventilates its aristocratic tendencies and its worship of Nietzschean force and strength. Its articles are always serious, high-toned and well written. A weekly, corresponding to our *Illustrated London News*, is the *Illustrazione Italiana* of Milan, furnishing excellent pictures of, and comments on, the week's events. The *Nuova Antologia*, a fortnightly review, corresponds to the French *Revue des Deux Mondes*. It was founded in the first instance by a group of Florentine patriots to propagate the views of Italian Liberals and to preach Italian Unity, and has never departed from the high political and intellectual standard thus imposed upon it. Later comers in the field are the high-class *Emporium*, published at Bergamo, which pays special attention to matters artistic, both modern and ancient, and whose illustrations are of rare excellence, and the more popular but eminently readable *Secolo XX*,

Illustrated Journals.

published in Milan, and also richly illustrated. In this periodical are always to be found articles dealing with interesting aspects of Italian life. As a sign of the times I must also note a new monthly, *La Nuova Parola*, dedicated to the propagation of the new idealism with a bias towards theosophy and spiritualism. Among its contributors are some of the finest of the younger spirits of Italy.

CHAPTER III

LITERATURE

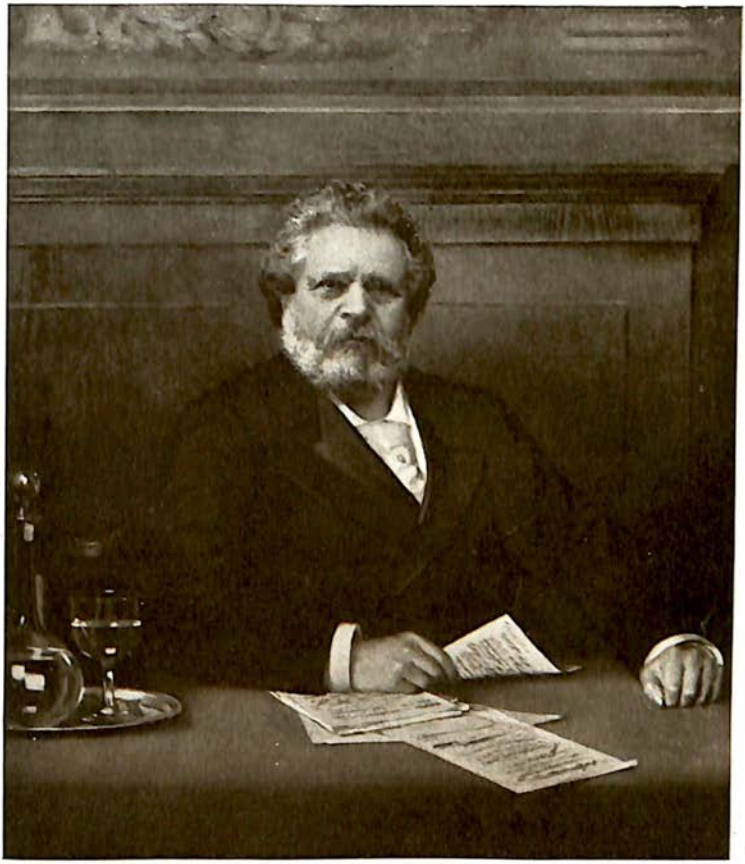
"LET me make a people's songs, and I care not who make their laws," was the saying of a sage who recognised to the full the formative value of literature. And the formative value of literature is above all great among a people like the Italian, rooted by descent in classicism and with whom consequently by atavism every intellectual manifestation at once takes a classic form. Indeed, to appreciate and understand current Italian literature a good knowledge of the classics is requisite. It is true that in the period immediately preceding Italy's political resurrection her literature in common with that of other European nations assumed a romantic garb; but Romanticism in Italy was nevertheless essentially practical, paradoxical though this statement may appear, and was utilized merely as a disguise in order to advocate the aspirations towards freedom and national independence that were throbbing in the hearts of every good native of the Peninsula.

Classicism of Italian Literature.

When the Austrians had been finally driven out and Italy was almost made, literary production had fallen very low. Sentimentalism and banality were in the ascendant. Italy furnished nothing better than feeble imitations of French models. It almost seemed as though Italian literature, once so great, so noble, so cosmopolitan, was defunct, that it had died in giving birth to the third Italy. But during these years of depression, between 1860 and 1870, the younger generation was ripening and preparing itself for action.

Period of Depression.

They had at last won political freedom. It was now time to win freedom in the field of intellect. Hence the first products of this healthy reaction necessarily assumed a



GIOSUÈ CARDUCCI
from the portrait by Corcos

Alla gentilissima Sig^na Zimmern
in omaggio
V. M. Corcos
Firenze 92.

revolutionary character. The standard-bearer of this revolt was Giosué Carducci, the first, as he is still the greatest, of the poet-thinkers of the third Italy.

And here a word may not be amiss to explain this expression "the third Italy," which meets us at every turn. It was Carducci who first employed it, thereby intending to convey the idea of a free Italy, of an Italy that proceeds upon its path towards happier destinies. The first Italy was held to be that which had given birth to the grandeur of ancient Rome, whence the eagles issued forth that conquered the whole of the known world. The second was that which the barbarians over-ran and subdued, which was partitioned among the stranger or involved in internecine warfare. The third is that which all the poets from Dante and Petrarch onwards yearned to behold, the Italy of the Italians renewed, re-born in art, literature, statecraft, in every manifestation of mental life. Giosué Carducci, to whose initiative is due this vast and far-reaching change that has, in a comparatively short time, come over the face of Italian literature, is still living, though he has recently resigned, on the score of ill-health, the Chair of Literature he held so many years at the University of Bologna. A rugged, uncompromising and somewhat churlish nature, who has not known how to make himself personally beloved, he was nevertheless revered as a teacher, and his scholastic influence has been deep and extended. Born in 1835 in a humble home not far from the site of Shelley's funeral pyre, under the shadow of the Carrara Alps, his childhood was passed in the country, within sight of the deep blue Mediterranean. Here he learnt to love nature, and indeed he learnt little else for a while, so that he was held somewhat of a dunce, for as he tells himself in a lovely poem concerning his childhood, his chief occupations were bird-nesting and throwing stones at the dark, austere cypress trees. It has well been asked whether this was a preparation for the stones he was

"The Third Italy."

Giosué Carducci.

to throw later on with his ringing verse and weighty prose at the men he deemed worthy of his disdain? When, however, he entered the University he took to reading hard; but he also played as hard, and his student pranks became proverbial. Already he was a pagan by inclination, a lover of Horace, and a follower of the Latin's light-hearted creed, and Horace has remained his favourite poet; like that poet, too, he has loved the good wine of his native land, if, unlike his model, he has not devoted his verse to chanting its praises. Coupled with these affections was an ardent love of his country, and this love he has kept untarnished and intact until this day. From the first Carducci instinctively understood that the breath of life had vanished from the literature of his day and he wished, as he expressed it, that men should not divert themselves with corpses. He felt that the moribund spirit of Romanticism must be combated at all costs and he therefore turned, as every Italian must turn by hereditary bias, towards the classics, and threw himself into what he designated as "a cold bath of erudition," studying assiduously first the Greeks, then the Latins, and then the Italian Mediæval and Renaissance classics, and only in the end touching the more modern writers among whom the German Heine especially exerted a profound influence. It was in this wise that this "armour-bearer of the classics," as he styles himself, "who had lived among the phantoms of an ancient age," became himself a classic poet. No wonder, therefore, that his first poems were aggressive in form, and subversive in spirit. He is no epic poet who narrates objectively and only what he has seen or heard. Carducci can only write what he feels and feels deeply, and when he sings, as he does often, of historical events that have a great attraction for him—on which account he has also been styled "the poet of history"—he does so not in the spirit of a bard who calmly narrates the facts, but rather he deals with the impression that the incident has

A Student of the Classics.

"The Poet of History."

made upon his own soul. And at the dawn of his artistic life his mental attitude towards his compatriots and towards the Italian Government was one of disdain. He was an ardent lover of freedom, a militant Republican, and in his songs he exalted such political rebels as Garibaldi and Mazzini, and cursed from the depths of his heart the shifty and deceptive policy of Pope Pius IX. He was the singer of no faction, as little as he was the adherent of any political party. His aims were high and ideal, and he wept to see his beloved land the sport of the political quacks and time-serving opportunists who had succeeded to the heroes of the national re-birth. In these early poems, eloquent, eager and sincere though they be, there is a violence of expression that sometimes leads him into errors of taste. In those days, however, he was but little read and scarcely known outside the literary clique of Bologna.

But in 1865 he made all Italy thrill with amazement, coupled in clerical circles with horror, by the publication of his famous "Hymn to Satan," that impassioned ode which it is said he wrote at one sitting, in a white heat of inspiration. At first, as might well be expected, this "war-song of paganism" was misunderstood and looked upon as a wholly irreverent, not to say, blasphemous utterance. When it came to be explained, however, and Carducci's cryptic meaning made clear, the intellectual world recognised that this was no mere irreverent vituperation. The Hymn was intended as the expression of a revolt against asceticism and mysticism, against the authority of the Church and the obscurantism of the priests. Satan does not stand here for the Semitic spirit of evil. He embodies the revolt in favour of classicism, the desire for intellectual freedom; and though the poem undoubtedly assails Christianity, or, to be more accurate, the Mediæval Church, it does so in no ribald spirit of license. Satan is here invoked merely as the undying, unconquerable spirit of freedom and progress. He is the herald of that return to Nature and love of Nature which has been one

of the chief motive forces in the new school of Italian literature, and must, therefore, be reckoned with. The present revival of Italian literature is due to a re-awakening of the same spirit that produced the Italian Renaissance, and we know how wide and deep and far-reaching were its consequences.

Italy has already twice led the van of civilization in Europe. Will she do it yet again and a third time ?

These insurrectionary poems were followed by more tranquil ones, but though Carducci's art grew more serene, and hence more beautiful, never did he strive to curry for popularity, and nowhere does he hesitate, whether in his concise verse, or his grand and adamantine prose, to flay the sickly poetasters of his day, regardless whether these be foes or friends. Once again he roused general interest and fierce discussion when he issued the first series of his famous lyrics which he gave forth with the collective title of "Odi Barbari," a title that sounded strange indeed to characterize most exquisitely polished verse. The qualifying word needs a little explanation.

"Odi Barbari."

With these Odes Carducci introduced into the Italian Parnassus a new form of metre, that has since been almost universally adopted by the younger men. He was weary of the old facile metres to which the Italian language lends itself so easily that they became almost mechanical. He also considered that these much-used forms had lost their freshness, and hence could not give vigour and tone to modern modes of thought. In reality this new departure was but a return to antiquity, a use of the metres employed not only by Horace and Catullus, but also by the earlier Greeks, in which quantity furnished the rhythm. Carducci's originality consisted in the fact that he recognised that quantity produces no echo to our modern ears, and that he strove, and with success, to produce the same effect by means of accent whether of word or verse. He wrote :

"I hate the accustomed verse.
Lazily it falls in with the taste of the crowd,
And pulseless in its feeble embraces
Lies down and sleeps.

For me that vigilant strophe
Which leaps with the plaudits and rhythmic stamp of the chorus
Like a bird caught in its flight, which
Turns and gives battle.

The Odi Barbari are so termed because they would so sound to the ears and judgment of the Greeks and Romans, although composed in the metrical forms belonging to the lyrical poetry of those nations, and because they will, too truly, so sound to very many Italians, although they are composed and harmonised in Italian verses and accents.

This perhaps rather dull explanation is needful, for without the key most English readers would think that modern Italian poetry was not poetry at all, at least not according to the recognised English models.

Thus, once again the Italians have initiated a new literary departure, though, of course, Carducci's bold experiment was at first derided and combated. But, in the end, opposition gave place to admiration, and later on to imitation.

A Convert to Monarchical Ideas.

It was after the third volume of the Odi Barbari saw the light that Carducci became converted from Republican to monarchical ideas. This conversion raised a storm of indignation at the time among his older friends, the more so as it was attributed, and perhaps not incorrectly, to the fascination exercised over the already elderly poet by the winning smiles of Queen Margherita, an eager admirer of the poet's verse. It was held as a reproach that he who had glorified the French Revolution in twelve sonnets of statuesque strength, entitled "Ca Ira," should bow the knee to Royalty. Carducci bore this abuse with the same serene indifference with which he bears praise or blame, and though he now votes with the monarchical party he has never become a courtier in any sense of the term.

With the publication of "Rime e Ritmi" Carducci closed his poetic career, a worthy finale containing some of his finest verse. In a brief Farewell appended to the volume he says that as the stars are setting for him into the sea of the unfathomable, so likewise songs are dying out from within his heart. This renunciation of further literary effort has permitted the publication of a final edition of his prose and poetic works, revised by himself and therefore standard. They are clearly printed in two volumes on thin India paper, at a small cost, and well deserve to be acquired by those who can read the originals. For those who cannot a fair idea of their character may be gathered from a selection translated by Frank Sewell. Briefly, it may be stated that the sentiments that inspire and animate all Carducci's writings are an intense veneration for the poets of Greece and Rome with whom he feels himself in intellectual sympathy, a profound love of Nature, such as the ancients felt and which we moderns characterize as pagan, a love, that is, of external nature, devoid of a search after such mystic meanings as are lent to it by the Northern mind, a love, too, for all that ministers to purely sensuous pleasure, and as a third factor the Hellenic instinct of form, and a repulsion against all that is supernatural and against what he would define as the Gothic spirit.

Complete Edition of Carducci's Works.

It would be idle to contend that Carducci is popular, though unquestionably he is the greatest and profoundest contemporary Italian poet. For this he is too erudite and often too obscure, and his themes too, are rarely of a popular character, and rarely treat of that chief theme of poets, Love. But he is universally respected, and Italy is justly proud of him, and none are found to deny that it is to him that she owes her present literary revival, that it is owing to his example and influence that the third Italy already boasts a long and noble roll-call of illustrious names.

Italy's Debt to Carducci.

Next in literary importance to Carducci, though widely

different in character and achievement, indeed only meeting upon the common ground of Hellenism, is the younger, more popular, and perhaps, outside of Italy, more widely known writer, Gabriele d'Annunzio. A poet, a play-writer, a novelist, he has achieved distinction and fame in all three departments, nor would it be easy to say in which he has reaped the proudest laurels, though it may be asserted that in all and above all else, even when writing prose, d'Annunzio is a true poet. A pity that he has not put his muse to such noble uses as has Carducci, that the serpent trail of eroticism too often defiles it, that his outlook on life is sometimes base and sensual, his ideas unclean, and his paganism epicurean.

Gabriele d'Annunzio.

Until comparatively recently fierce controversies waged about d'Annunzio's name, and lavish praise alternated with equally lavish blame. But to-day after he has given forth the latest fruits of his intellect, it is idle to deny that d'Annunzio is a great artist. Even the adversaries of yesterday admit so much. It is equally idle to deny that he is no moralist, and that his works are not for the "young person." But these two points, and especially the latter, are, after all, not the standard of artistic merit. His domain is life as seen under its material and intellectual aspects, and he does not pretend to gloss over or minimize what are to him realities.

D'Annunzio's career, which has been as rapid as it is brilliant, began at the early age of fourteen, when still a schoolboy, by the publication of "Primo Vero," followed at 16 by "Canto Nuovo." Both books instantly attracted attention, and, like Byron, D'Annunzio awoke one morning to find himself famous. This fact is the more curious because as a child he hated poetry, and when being set at school to write 50 lines on the subject of Thermopylae, he only succeeded after much pain and grief in turning out three, though now he is only too prolific. In his case, truly, the child was not the father of the man. His first books already showed his

Earlier Works of d'Annunzio.

metrical aptitude and wonderful verbal dexterity. In 1883 there followed "Intermezzo di Rime." This book, in which he gave vent to his insatiable thirst after life and love, might be dismissed as a youthful aphrodisiacal utterance, were it not also something deeper and more significant. With its publication D'Annunzio at one bound became the leader of a school that has had a vast influence upon modern Italian literature, a school whose characteristics, to use his own words, "were the abuse of colour, the employment of unusual expressions and a great audacity in erotic description."

Influence of Rome.

At about this time D'Annunzio, who was born at Pescara, in the Abruzzi, beside that Adriatic whose salt sea savour sounds in his pages, removed to Rome, where he frequented that high society in which love is only a form of sport. In Rome, too, he could contemplate the art and poetry of the past, yet curiously enough the Eternal City did not enlarge his horizon and enrich his personality, but only inspired works in which he expanded his voluptuous fantasy. Hence it was not the Rome of the Cæsars that held him spellbound, but the Rome of the Popes, with its sumptuous villas, its highly ornate churches, its ever-murmuring caressing fountains. The pages of "Libro delle Vergini" and "San Panteleone" teem with pathological and cruel spectacles. Our author here shows traces of Zola's sway, but the side of Zola which most appeals to him is that seen in "La Faute de l'Abbé Mouret." It was inevitable, too, that since the naturalistic school was then at its apex, he should be touched by its spirit; but it was merely an imitation of a tendency, since his own artistic personality was always uppermost, with its peculiar merits and its defects. Some of the tales in "San Panteleone" are, however, direct imitations of Maupassant, though even here the imitation is more apparent than real, since the art and method of treatment are so different.

It was during the period of D'Annunzio's Roman sojourn (1886-1893) that he wrote "Sotteo," "La Chimera," "Le

Elegie Romane," " Il Poema Paradisiaco," in the sphere of poetry, and the novels, "Giovanni Episcopo" and "L'Innocente." "Sotteo" displays his study of ancient bards both in versification and in the manner in which he wove conceits and poetic garlands for the women he loved. In " Elegie Romane" breathes the whole amplitude of the Roman Campagna with its fiery sunsets, its oppressive solitudes. Similar sentiments are roused by " Poema Paradisiaco," but here there predominates besides a sense of sadness, the satiety of exhausted passion. Small wonder that many of these productions were attacked on the score of immorality. D'Annunzio had wandered too far from the Latin sobriety of Carducci. Nevertheless he declaimed against realist verse. He asserted that the essence of poetry was mystery and that poets should give to mankind the record of things they have never seen. " I hold," he wrote, " that the poetry of the future will have all the mystery and suggestiveness of great music. In lyric poetry the essential element is not the word, it is the music; it is not the word as letter but the word as sound and rhythm."

But excessive adulation and his really phenomenal early triumphs had a little turned D'Annunzio's head, and small wonder. This passing phase of sensual satiety led to what he described as a convalescence of the soul, and to render this the more complete he returned for a while to live among his Abruzzi mountains and beside the sea that he has always loved so ardently because of its fierce freedom and its mystic suggestiveness. Here he turned to writing longer novels, of which the first, " Il Piacere," again offended against good taste by its frank voluptuousness, but nevertheless contained some splendid passages of description expressed in the lavish luxury of phrase, the extravagance of dictum and imagery that is his keynote and which fatigues after a while because of its too uniform splendour. The hero, Andrea Sperelli, like the protagonist of most of his romances, is the incarnation of his own curious complex and degenerate Ego. In

Longer Novels.

"Giovanni Episcopo" and "L'Innocente" can be found traces of that Russian literature which was just then in the ascendant in Italy. The fundamental thesis of both books is similar, and once more lascivious sentiment dominates, mingled with morbid pathos and vivid landscape pictures. In truth D'Annunzio resembles that Marchesa di Monferrato of whom Boccaccio speaks, who knew how to make an infinitude of dishes, but though they had different names and looked differently they were all chicken.

Il Trionfo della Morte.

In "Il Trionfo della Morte," published in 1894, we first meet with the influence of Nietzsche. Already in 1892 D'Annunzio had published an article in which he announced to the Italian world his discovery of this German philosopher, adding, however, that he himself had long been a follower of these theories without knowing their origin.

The "Trionfo della Morte" is certainly D'Annunzio's strongest novel, not because of its plot, which is of the slightest, but for its exotic and artistic treatment. The hero, Giorgio Aurispa, is as usual an incarnation of the writer under another aspect. Again, descriptions of rare beauty abound, especially that of a pilgrimage to the sanctuary of Casalbordino, which has become almost a classic. The influence of the Frenchman Barrès, together with that of Nietzsche, can be found in the "Vergine delle Roccie," another book of unpleasant central purpose, leaving a bad aesthetic taste behind it. Blood, carnage, and lust are invoked and panegyrized with nauseous reiteration, while the main thesis, supposed to be founded upon Nietzsche, is an absolute perversion of the chief contentions of that philosopher. And yet again what redeeming descriptions of old Italian villas, of secluded gardens, of floral wealth. If, to be paradoxical, we could have D'Annunzio's novels without his plots and personages, how splendid they would be! The language, too, of what exquisite harmony, even if at times it is too redundant, too prolix, for D'Annunzio becomes intoxicated with the sound of his own splendid diction.

Up to this point D'Annunzio had shown himself as a voluptuous artist who fashioned for himself an environment adapted to his artistic egoism. Reading his works no one would apprehend that he could also be a great patriotic poet. But his artistic soul and complex personality has more proxies than that of Dr. Jekyll. He who delights in epicurean ease, who appears the incarnation of a decadent, suddenly showed himself endowed with virile vigour, putting forth a series of inspiring Odes that appealed to Italy's most manly feelings. In these "Odi Navali" he chanted the glories of those huge battleships which Italy was the first to construct, of those agile and insidious torpedoes that can wound to death these marine Colossi. This was followed, with that wonderful prolific rapidity that is his, by the "Canzone di Garibaldi," wherein is celebrated the great Italian hero. Here figure neither the Italian people nor those ideas that conduced to Italy's resurrection. The first section treats of war, the second is an idyll. The Garibaldian heroes are brought in with fine pictorial effects and certain episodes are of potent and enchanting force. The idyllic note is furnished by Garibaldi's return to the island of Caprera, bringing naught with him as a recompense for having bestowed a free fatherland on the Italians, save a sack of grain. In this "Canzone" D'Annunzio has revived the *lassa* or monorhyme habitual to the *chanson de geste*, which deriving from the Carlovingian cycle, came into Italy in the latter half of the fifteenth century.

Patriotic Poems.

A painful book, even to D'Annunzio's warmest adherents, was the novel "Il Fuoco," for its veil of disguise was too thin not to permit of a comprehension as to the original of the great actress described therein with a lack of tenderness and good taste that offended the more, as all the world knew how deeply the writer was indebted to this lady. Learned discussions concerning Venetian art, fine impressions of the lagoons, subtle fantasies,

A Painful Book.

did not suffice to redeem this book from the charge of *lèse* friendship. It is a relief to turn away to the two volumes of "Laudi," wherein D'Annunzio has touched his high-water mark. The first is a complete poem dealing with a voyage taken to that land of Hellas, which is sacred to the writer as the cradle of civilization, and his return to Rome, where he finds a quiet, undisturbed asylum in the Sistine Chapel, wherein he hopes to recover faith in himself. In the end, however, in order to touch the apex of wisdom, he quits even this for the desert where he recovers self-mastery in solitude and learns to comprehend that harmony of life which man has tarnished. Thus, as ever, D'Annunzio can write nothing purely objective. Sooner or later his own person must come to the fore. Nevertheless, the poem is no sentimental journey, no search for a deeper soul such as the "Divina Commedia." It rather resembles Heine's "Germania." And because in this book D'Annunzio lauds all things, because he has known how to enjoy all things he has named it "Laudi." But it is the second volume that constitutes his grandest attainment, and which will survive when his unpleasanter works are consigned to Limbo, rescuing thence only for some prose Anthology many of the magnificent natural descriptions. This second "Laudi" is divided into two books of which one is dedicated to "Electra" and the other to "Halcyon." In "Electra" D'Annunzio strives to temper the souls of his compatriots towards loftier idealisms than those of the daily petty squabbles of party politics. He exalts the grand prophetic soul of Dante and then apostrophizes the young King and asks him, he who is so sincerely thoughtful concerning the destinies of his kingdom, whether he is acquainted with all the beauty and the power that is the heritage of the Italian soil. He lauds the potent Italian cities, he recalls their ancient grandeur, their civic virtues, he also speaks of Trieste that beckons to its parent from across the Italian seas; he breaks into strains of indignation and fury against those

The Book of Praise.

who have lowered Italy in the eyes of the nations by vile and shameful transactions. He glorifies the proud soul of Giosué Carducci. This section is written in the severe, restricted metre of Petrarch's " Canzone " ; it lends itself less to diffuseness than " Terza Rima," and in its perfection of form and noble aims represents a high stage of artistic development. In the book " Halcyon," the poet, after having sung and lauded the Italian heroes, turns to earth and Nature and praises them. He here gathers together all the impressions made on his soul at sight of these beauties. Matter and manner are here blended with taste and perception into a soft and liquid harmony that makes us regret the more that D'Annunzio's Muse does not always soar in these Parnassian heights. His soul, though it has remained pagan, is here suffused with a new breath of purity and therefore this is the only one of his books which can be unrestrictedly praised.

Unfortunately, his plays, despite their lyric beauty, prove that a love for the gory, for license, for the gross, the abnormal, has not been eliminated from his nature.

The Plays of D'Annunzio.

But here, too, his influence has been far-reaching and revolutionary. Here, too, he has striven after that richness of speech which distinguishes his novels and poems, whereby he has recalled the writers of his land to the fountain head of their language, the fourteenth-century poets, thereby enlarging and ennobling speech while rendering it, it must be confessed, just because of this enhanced wealth, more difficult of comprehension to the foreigner.

It was in 1896 that D'Annunzio first came forward as a play-writer with his " Dreams of the Seasons," novel in theatrical method but revolving round the favourite D'Annunzian motives, plays rather adapted to reading than to performance. The " Gioconda " was more dramatic, and since it was first interpreted by the Duse for whom it was written and whose beautiful hands were, so to speak, the heroines of the piece, it quickly met with favour. Here at

least, though an unpleasant incident is not lacking, D'Annunzio expounds a fine central purpose, the extolling of the power of pain as a great moral regenerator. The heroine, Silvia Settelà, to save the masterpiece of sculpture that her husband has wrought, loses both her hands while preventing its fall, those hands which were her beauty and her glory. Deeply touching is the scene at the end where, owing to her mutilation, she cannot give her little child the embrace it craves from its mother.

His next play, "La Gloria," was less successful; indeed, on its first appearance it was hissed off the boards. It was intended to be a political and at the same time a symbolical drama, and rather fell between two stools. It aimed at revealing the persistent fever that bids the multitude ever clamour for something new. After this attempt to deal with modern Parliamentary life D'Annunzio took a leap back into mediæval times and wrote his poetic tragedy "of dream and crime," "Paolo e Francesca," in which he does not follow the development of the tale as told in Dante's immortal lines. In diction it has all D'Annunzio's richly-coloured splendour and sonorous harmony, its erudition reproduces faithfully the manners and environment of the epoch, but for pure human pathos it falls far below the telling of that sorrowful tale of love and woe in Dante's eight pregnant lines. In "La Figlia di Jorio" and "La Fiaccola sotto il Moggio," both weird and gruesome productions, D'Annunzio deals with the customs and character of his wild, untutored Abruzzese and Neapolitan country folk, and both on this account lend themselves to picturesque scenic effects. Picturesque, too, if less dramatic, and once again marred by an unpleasant episode which was obviously introduced as a challenge to common morality, as it is in no sense an integral necessity to the action, is "La Città Morta." As a reading play it has passages of great lyrical beauty, as an acted play it drags a little for lack of constructive action. D'Annunzio's design was to compose a modern drama on the

Political and other Dramas.

lines of ancient tragedy, imagining circumstances to-day that reproduce the Fate of the Greeks. But modern ideas and ethics are not Greek ideas and ethics, and however much we may strive to do so, we cannot really reproduce or cause others to feel the mental atmosphere of a civilization that has vanished.

Certainly, despite his grave failings, his moral twist, D'Annunzio's influence has been great and also beneficial.

Extent of D'Annunzio's Influence.

What he has done for the theatre can be shown perhaps more clearly when I deal with this phase of Italy's mental life; but there is another branch in which also he has made a big revolution, and that is in the matter of the manufacture of his books. He has insisted on fine type, hand-made paper, artistic binding, and first-class illustrations, so that the outside as well as the inside of book or play may be a work of art. And this delicate tribute to intellectual production has, thanks to his example, become so universal that the poor paper and cheap printing of the past has almost become extinct and every book of any merit that is issued is more or less an edition-de-luxe, an edition-de-luxe, too, issued at a moderate price accessible to all purses. He has been the William Morris of Italy, and, like Morris, has revived the old founts of type, the good old patterns of binding, though, of course, being Italian, these take on a Renaissance, and not a Gothic character.

It is some years now since D'Annunzio left his native Abruzzi and settled himself in the pretty little Tuscan village of Settignano, near Florence, living in a house that he has adapted and furnished in fifteenth-century style. He loves the mystic and soft serenity of the Tuscan landscape, with its grey-green olives and dark green cypresses, its climbing vines—and to this landscape he has penned some lovely verses.

That Carducci and D'Annunzio both became objects of imitation goes without saying, and many of their followers are by no means despicable poets. Minor poets, too,

Italy has by the score, and melodious and delicate works spring from their lyre. The language itself, with its fluent vowels, its rich harmonies, its swelling cadence, lends itself to versification, and few Italians, no matter of what class, but can turn out graceful verse even at a moment's notice. Indeed, improvisation is a gift among high and low, and many an uncultured peasant who can neither read nor write, will pronounce as though by inspiration stanzas and ballads that can be put down direct to paper and are perfect in all respects. I have myself been present when an illiterate peasant, dressed as Father Christmas, handed out to each person of a large company the gift designed for him or her, of whose contents and destination he knew nothing until at the very moment of presentation, accompanying each parcel with a neatly-phrased and appropriate couplet, and even a sonnet. This, coupled with the perfectly courteous manners of the peasantry, especially in the ancient realm of Etruria, is yet another proof of the ingrained and inherited culture of this ancient people.

Lesser Poets.

And the peasant, too, has found his bard and modern exponent. The only one of the Italian Parnassus who can really stand worthily beside Carducci and D'Annunzio, and whose influence is as deep and broad, is Giovanni Pascoli. He may be defined as Italy's living Georgic poet, a direct descendant in Apollo of Virgil, not Virgil the extoller of "pious Aeneas," but Virgil, the singer of the beauties of Nature, that were to him also an inexhaustible fountain of inspiration.

Giovanni Pascoli.

As yet Pascoli is little known outside his native land, perchance because the nature of his gifts is not of a kind calculated to provoke polemics. But he is, nevertheless, a true poet by the grace of God. His songs have nothing in common with the pastoral poetry of the imaginary Arcadies that were so fashionable at one time; they derive their impetus direct from the soil and are not seen athwart conventions and

artifices. And in his case, too, the life explains the artist.

Life in the Romagna.

Giovanni Pascoli was born in 1855 in the Romagna, a province which to this day preserves a marked individuality. Indeed, individuality is a curious and notable feature—all parts of Italy and districts and cities have almost the idiosyncrasies of human beings. "Romagna the sturdy" is the name of Pascoli's country, and certainly its inhabitants have ever been distinguished for their strength and martial spirit. To this day the Romagnoli are hospitable and fearless, just as they were when they sheltered Dante from the wrath of Florence. Their generous, deeply religious spirit is quickly moved at the sight of sorrow, and the weak appeal to their innate chivalry. And beside these traits and a hot-bloodedness that drives them into acts of vendetta, there exists a certain mystic and intangible susceptibility in these strong souls, a species of intuition of a Fate against which man cannot fight. Hence they accept silently all that life brings to them, and do not kick against the pricks. This sensibility very naturally leads them to Nature, and indeed nowhere else in Italy do even the great nobles live so close to the soil as here, enjoying the simple pleasures she can offer.

Such was the mental and moral environment into which Pascoli was born. His father was a humble factor whose murder by an unknown hand for causes never discovered, when the boy was twelve, cast a shade of tragedy over his life, and made him at one fell blow the head of a large family of children. The catastrophe broke the mother's heart and she died soon after, but not before three of her children had preceded her. The survivors, Pascoli and two sisters, clung the more closely together, and have so clung to this day, for Pascoli has never married, and probably never will. These heavy blows of fortune made him a poet. The memory of these deaths throbs through his verse, his sorrow is ever to the fore, but it is a resigned sorrow; he does not quarrel with his Creator, he has not lost his faith. "Myricae"

was the title of his first book, given to the world many years after his poems had already circulated in MSS. among his friends. He defined them as mere windfalls, the fruit from the tree he hoped would come later. To Pascoli's great surprise the book met with success. Its simple character, its love of Nature, were a relief after the hot passions sung by the poets of the D'Annunzian school or the classicisms of Carducci's followers. The dominant note in this and in Pascoli's subsequent volumes is an invitation to love life and to bless it, since life despite all is beautiful, and it would be still more so if we did not so often spoil it wilfully for ourselves and others. Let us then gather gratefully the little herbs (Myricae) that grow beside our paths and enjoy their fragrance so fully as to exclude any desire for more potent odours.

Pascoli's First Book.

Thus Pascoli by his verse unwittingly destroyed a conception that has ever been deeply rooted in the Italian mind, and this is that poetry, in order to be poetical, must either find its themes and its inspiration in the past or take rhetorical flights into an imaginary and impossible Future. The present, the poets contended, is unpoetical. It was reserved to Pascoli to destroy a prejudice in the Italian mind, which in England had long been overcome by the Lake school and their followers. Pascoli's attention is centred on the present and he sings of it as he sees it, or if he deals with the future he regards it as the sphinx that awaits man at the end of his pre-ordained course, there to bestow on him the key to life's enigma. Pascoli, in short, is a serene optimist who has struck a new and well-defined note of idealism as opposed to the current Italian realism. There is a sixteenth-century classicism about his verse, though it is at the same time attentively modern in its aspirations and its humanitarianism. And yet another curious feature. Although he deals with family affections, Pascoli never writes of love in the sexual sense. Quite recently he has been elected to fill the Chair of Literature

Optimism and Idealism.

at Bologna left vacant by the retirement of Carducci, but in the vacation months Pascoli continues to reside in the Tuscan country-side, and above all it is Barga that he loves, a little hill-hamlet, enclosed in chestnut woods, which, despite its size, can boast a Romanesque Cathedral, and many other reminiscences of art.

The Place of the Novel in the Literary Revival.

It is curious that novel-writing has so far, except the notable examples named, been the weakest branch of the literary revival, while poetry has been its strongest. This is no encyclopædia, and it would be wearisome merely to enumerate the many men and also the few women who have distinguished themselves in this line. But it is certainly to be regretted that in the matter of novel-writing current Italian literature is not stronger, for themes should not be lacking, and above all it would be well to follow in the tracks laid down by Verga and deal with the very marked differences of national character that are to be found in a land where divergencies of temperament and customs are so marked as to seem at times almost impossible, when we remember that the whole country is living under one law. Between, say, Piedmont and Calabria there is a gulf fixed that represents at least some five centuries of culture. One of the few who have written such regional tales is the Sardinian, Grazia Deledda. In her tales and novels the protagonist, so to speak, is her native isle with its strange, half-savage population, speaking a weird dialect, a mixture of Spanish, Latin, and Italian, a country where the vendetta and brigandage still flourish, and where only 80 per cent. of the inhabitants can read or write. There is a rugged touch, an acrid rural savour about her work that perhaps constitutes its attraction for our jaded palates, for it must in all honesty be admitted that apart from the novelty and curious attractiveness of the *milieu* as works of narrative art, the merit of G. Deledda's books is not of the first order. It is, therefore, the more to

Grazia Deledda.

be deplored that since her marriage with an Italian bureaucrat, and her settlement in Rome she should have abandoned her own lines and have attempted to write a novel dealing with a world of which she has not sufficient knowledge. It is to be hoped that she will recognise her error and return in thought to her attractive and little-known rocky island and give the world another book such as "Anime Oneste," picturing the quiet family life of a petty burgher in Sardinia, or one like "Elias Portolu," in which the struggles between love and a religious vocation in a passionate, strong peasant nature is depicted with real force. Very wisely G. Deledda does not carry the use of dialect to extremes; her books are therefore readable for foreigners.

Salvatore Farina.

An author whom foreigners can also read with ease, as his style is limpid and he avoids the archaisms of the D'Annunzian school, is Salvatore Farina, who has, perhaps a little incongruously, been called the Italian Dickens. Farina's books are always pure in theme and intention, he exalts family life and honest work, he possesses a gentle humour and a genial kindliness, and when he instructs and admonishes he does not do so in a pedagogic spirit. His book "Mio Figlio," the life-story of a youth from babyhood to manhood, is a gem in its special line, and is also interesting and instructive for the side-lights it casts upon the course of daily life led by middle-class Italian families of the north.

Gerolamo Rovetta.

Of a different type is Gerolamo Rovetta, whose romances, besides the usual social themes modelled on French examples, are incisive indictments of the course of public events in Italy. The colours are laid on with a heavy hand, and we hope that much is an exaggeration. Still, such works cannot but be helpful to a young nation. Of these books the most notable is "Barconda" and "Mater Dolorosa." He has also written some stirring plays dealing with Italian history during the time of the Austrian occupation.

A lively dialogue and rapid action distinguishes the works of Francesco de Roberto, who would be noteworthy could he liberate himself from the themes of illicit love. It is strange that while in other European countries the fact that the passion of love does not form the only element of romance and motive force of action, indeed in the life of man is growing to be more and more incidental and of passing moment, Italian writers are still more or less hide-bound in this convention. They do not take into account the vast extension of the sphere of human interests. It is but fair, perhaps, to add that in Italy, where as yet political, social and philanthropic life does not play the preponderating part it does in England, these questions and problems assume disproportionate proportions. But it is for these reasons that, with the exceptions noted, Italian novels do not present great attractions for foreign readers. They give them little that is new or original. The local novel, the novel of manners, is certainly not yet acclimatized in Italy. It would almost seem as if the writing of long and carefully-thought-out romances, as distinguished from short tales, in which in the past they so excelled, was alien to the genius of the Italian people. This monotonous restriction of theme to a single passion is certainly to be regretted. Perhaps it is a Latin failing. It has been well pointed out that the English novel lives by character, the French by situation.

Francesco de Roberto.

This accusation might sound severe were it not so amply compensated for in the domain of poetry and the drama. Here the Italians are strong and original, and here, curiously enough, where one would most expect it, love is not the predominant theme. Italy has living poets who do not sing of love, and dramatists who have comprehended the dramatic staleness of the theme. Indeed, to return for a while to the poets, it is hard to know which to speak of and which we can afford to omit. Their work almost without exception has the merit

Novelists and Poets.

of being individual and expressive of the personality of the writer. To those who can read Italian a volume by Eugenia Levi, "I Nostri Poeti Viventi," is to be highly commended; for those who cannot, a volume entitled "Italian Lyrists of To-day," by G. A. Greene.

In modern Italy, in contradistinction to other lands, literature can show no dominant school or tendency. Every writer has his own artistic ideal and promulgates it without fear. The various aspects of literary art are, therefore, represented by the various writers. Beside the best-known men there stand a whole array of really excellent poets. It has been contended that man liberates himself intellectually by either dreaming of vice or of virtue, and by rendering real to himself the one or the other. Foremost among those attracted by a dream of vice, but who nevertheless have given a new impetus to Italian literature, stands Olindo Guerrini, better known by his pseudonym of Lorenzo Stecchetti. He possesses a spontaneous poetic vein and a delicacy of workmanship. He might have become a great singer despite his exaggerated cynicism and his Bohemian pose, had he not disgusted the public by audacious immoralities. Still, his "La Nuova Polemica" and "Postuma" will live, for they contain poems that are masterpieces in their lines, even though they are scarcely adapted for family reading. The instant attention that the first volume, "Postuma," met with, was in part, but only in part, due to a literary trick. Guerrini pretended that these poems, which he published in 1877, were scattered verse left by a dead cousin who desired as his last request that his works might see the light. The embittered literary controversy they provoked was remarkable even in a land where such academic discussions are conducted with fierce ardour. And so, too, was their influence. His followers and imitators were legion, some by no means of despicable merit.

Lorenzo Stecchetti.

As opposed to Stecchetti, as a man whose ideal is virtue

rather than vice, stands Antonio Fogazzaro, the leader of a spiritual reaction. To judge him aright it must be remembered that he is not only a poet and a novelist, but that he has evolved for himself a system of religious, metaphysical, aesthetic and political ideas and ideals. He is so fervently Catholic as to believe in Papal infallibility: yet at the same time he is animated by a sincere desire to conciliate conflicting creeds and social aims. Thus, he holds that the Darwinian theories can be used for the conciliation of faith with science. While not opposed to the natural expression of passion, he endeavours to keep sensuality in check and by idealising emotion to bring it closer to his conception of spiritual life. In politics he holds with the Christian Democrats: he desires to see the Church animated by a patriotism that should unite the wealthier classes with the poorer. Aesthetically, he holds that art should tend towards ethics, like Ruskin, and is opposed to art for arts' own sake. He has been called a "Paladin of the spirit." Certainly the spirit that animates him is scarcely one that the Italian character comprehends or loves. It is too Northern and mystic for their clear-cut logical intelligences, which incline little to dreaming.

Ideals of Antonio Fogazzaro.

The first of his books to attract notice was "Malombra," a tale in which spiritualism played a large part, an entirely new note at the time in Italian literature. It is written half in a credulous, half in a medical spirit, and was the first word that penetrated across the Alps of that Theosophic and occult propaganda which is now finding a few followers in the Peninsula. It was succeeded by "Daniele Cortis," designed to deal with the writer's views concerning conflicts between love and duty, which for the first time in modern Italian literature upheld the doctrine that, despite the Papal veto, a man could be a good Catholic and serve his country in the Chamber. In "Piccolo Mondo Moderno" this same thesis of love versus duty recurs under a different name and changed

Tales of Love and Duty.

social conditions. The relations between the lovers is somewhat amusingly summed up in a scene where the woman puts up her mouth to be kissed but at the same time prudently keeps her finger on the button of the electric bell. This novel besides being a story, is also something of a tractate on marriage and the relations of the sexes as regarded by Theology, a form of romance not much liked in Italy, where thesis novels and sermonizing romances are but scantily appreciated. It would not be possible to imagine an Italian "Robert Elsmere" or "John Inglesant." The Italian likes his pleasures pure and unmixed, and the intrusion of theological speculations and ethical discussions affords him little pleasure. "Il Mistero del Poeta" was much too nebulous and sentimental for Italian taste, but pleased greatly when published in German. Indeed, it reads rather like a German tale for young ladies.

Fogazzaro's Strongest Work.

Fogazzaro's strongest work is unquestionably his "Piccolo Mondo Antico." Finely conceived and developed is the contrast between husband and wife, she a woman devoid of faith, but of high moral force, and endowed with a great sentiment of justice; he a fervent believer, but impressionable and weak. The action is laid during the wars of Italy's political resurrection, which permits of some fine descriptions of scenery. Misfortune and evil persecute the couple, Franco and Luisa, bringing into ever sharper relief the contrasts of their fundamental Ego. When their only little girl dies, drowned almost before their eyes, this sorrow proves the touchstone of their respective souls. Luisa, the strong, loses all vigour of character and becomes almost demented, while Franco shows an energy which none believed him to possess. In Franco is symbolized the type of the believer, generally weak, but who in supreme moments extracts energy from his faith. "Piccolo Mondo Antico" has some affinities with Manzoni's famous "Promessi Sposi." Here, too, the essential essence of justice and of rebellion is placed in juxtaposition. In this novel Fogazzaro shows, as elsewhere too, that he

possesses a gently comic vein, thus often creating situations of exquisite humour. His latest work "Il Santo," a sequel to "Piccolo Mondo Maderno," has drawn down upon him the condemnation of the Church of Rome, which has placed the book upon the Index. Fogazzaro in this novel deals at great length with current ecclesiastical problems, advocating a change and purification of methods. He has also once more emphasized, what he holds to be a crying need for Italy, namely that the civil and ecclesiastical authorities should no longer stand in antagonistic attitudes towards each other, but should work in harmony for the common welfare. In his poems, as in his prose works, he is the bard of hope and faith. "Miranda" is a romance in verse, but he has also written simple lyrics, republished as a collection, poems in which form on which Italians lay so much stress, is perhaps a little neglected, but which are dominated by a delicacy of touch and sentiment and also by a love of Nature, in a Northern rather than a Southern sense, that is to say, a manner of treating Nature subjectively rather than objectively. He is a profound believer, and Nature is both vivified and made mystical to him by its ever-present suggestion of an unknown influence above and outside her. Indeed, Fogazzaro is a north Italian, and this makes itself felt in all he writes. His home is near to those Italian lakes he loves so well and of which he writes so much, and his ideals are northern rather than southern. For in Italy, owing to its geographical conformation this regionalism is a factor that has to be reckoned with in all manifestations of intellectual life.

Giovanni Verga.

To turn from the mystical Fogazzaro to the realist Giovanni Verga is to pass from a dim religious twilight to the fierce glory of a Southern sun. Verga runs a rich kaleidoscope of brilliant colours before our eyes. The subject matter of his earlier novels is trivial, and had he only written these he would not have attained to his present high position. They deal with the spasms of sensual love in conflict with social conditions. His

heroines are all lascivious, fantastic creatures of insatiable desire, and the men who love them are of the hot-blooded Southern temperament. In this period of Verga's development he was subjected to the influence of the French. His own art was not yet ripe, although he was already an expert in rendering all the varied aspects of passion. In 1882 he took a higher flight. Realism was claiming him for its own: and with this change begins the best period of his art. But his realism is different from that of Zola or Maupassant. He is one of those in whom realism is a merit, since he employed it to present the vivid impressions made by his native Sicily. With the fidelity of a dispassionate observer, and the skill of a rare artist, he brings before us the men and women of that exquisite but unhappy island, still suffering from the results of centuries of mis-rule, and unrolls a series of tragic or piteous tales of long-nurtured or sudden love passions, of love, of ferocity, of vengeance, of struggles and contests of every kind. These tales, "Vita dei Campi" and "Novelle Rusticana," dealing with the manners and humours of Sicilian existence, told with brevity, with illuminating lightning flashes of insight, will survive as valuable documents for the social history of Sicily even after the conditions they depict have yielded to progress. Each is a little masterpiece in its own line and one, "Cavalleria Rusticana," is familiar all the world over because of its musical setting by Pietro Mascagni. These Sicilian peasant tales form an interesting contrast to George Sand's idyllic pictures of the life of the Berri rustics. Nor did Verga rest content to deal with his native compatriots in such comparatively brief compass. He also began a sequence of romances that were to treat in complexity of the local conditions. "I Vinti" was to be the comprehensive title of a series, planned on the lines of the "Rougon Macquart." It was to deal with the weak who had fallen by life's wayside, men who had lost courage, who bowed their heads passively and fatalistically. Its central thesis is that

Tales of Sicilian Life.

Photo by *Giacomo Brogi, Florence*

MATILDE SERAO

mankind is not divided into the traditional classes but only into victors and vanquished, that all must either be hammer or anvil. This idea is not new in literature, but it has not been treated quite in Verga's manner and certainly not in Verga's *milieu*. The first of the series was "Malavoglia," narrating the misfortunes pursuing a family of poor fishermen. It was followed by "Mastro Don Gesualdo," a vigorous picture of the new bourgeoisie that is arising in Sicily, that classic land of nobles and peasants, where until recently there was no middle-class. It traces the social ascent of a man of the people and the decadence of a noble house, who had become his victims. Both novels are penetrated with a potent spirit of justice, and are so really remarkable that it is deeply to be deplored that they met with so little financial success, that the author abandoned their continuation and returned instead to the more profitable but less valuable descriptions of the Milanese fashionable world to live amid which he has deserted the pyramidal shadow of his native Etna. But whether writing these less characteristic tales, or those treating of the Golden Isle, Verga is ever a realist whose realism has a healthy character. His human beings are sympathetically presented, even when they are miserable or vile. We feel he does not despair of his fellow men, that misery and oppression cannot and will not for ever be their portion.

Milanese Tales.

Yet another follower of the realist school and far more influenced by French examples is Matilde Serao, a Greek by birth and maternal ancestry, a Neapolitan on the paternal side and by residence and education. Her father lived by his wits, chiefly as a journeyman journalist, and hence the surroundings amid which her youth were passed acquainted her with much misery, with many sorry expedients, with the moral and social atmosphere of the Neapolitan lower middle class and of the populace that crowds in its narrow, fetid alleys. Endowed with keen powers of observation and a quick, limpid and living

Matilde Serao.

intelligence, she understands how to transcribe with precision and freshness the sentiments and impressions provoked by her circumstances. Full of tender indulgence towards the unfortunate, she sympathises with their sufferings; above all she has a profound comprehension of the Italian woman, especially of the southern woman, with her quick response to all manifestations of love. Thus her art reflects the true Neapolitan environment, which is a strange compound of transports and sentiment. In her descriptive parts she is minute to a fault but also so true and graphic that in her case prolixity becomes almost a virtue.

Her career commenced in a newspaper office, where she revealed her rare powers by writing short sketches of Neapolitan life. They were followed by "Il Romanzo delle Fanciulle," in which were exposed all the petty but none the less poignant life-dramas of a whole succession of girls of different social classes. Rather of the same character are the longer novels, "Fantasia" and "Cuore Infermo." The former is a story of that pathological nature beloved by a certain section of the modern school. Here we have to do with one of those nervous, hysterical, sentimental, and yet cold-blooded creatures, which to our shame be it spoken, are a type of our age and a special outcome of our civilization. Lucia, the heroine, is closely related to Madame Bovary, with whom she shares both religious ecstasy and moral weakness. Like Madame Bovary, she is a mistress in the art of posing to herself and the world, and lets herself be misled by her own fantasies. In short, she is a person whose responsibility for her actions we should be almost inclined to question. The action is laid in a Neapolitan convent-school, which gives the author an opportunity of showing up some of the worst sides of the Church educational system. The action, as it develops, could perhaps have occurred only in the hot-blooded South, but it is no reproach to the writer to say this, for it proves how thoroughly she understands the temperament of her own

"Fantasia."

people. It is not the least of Matilde Serao's merits that she is devoid of prejudices, and that she treats each psychological problem as it presents itself from an entirely impartial standpoint. On the other hand, she never defends immorality. On the contrary, she plainly demonstrates the errors into which man falls when he strays from the straight paths of virtue. Hence her tales are more efficacious than many a sermon, and far better than the purposely moral tale in which the reader is ever aware of the uplifted forefinger of the Mentor. That her processes of analysis of the human soul are almost microscopic in their minuteness she has shown also in "Cuore Infermo." The book lays bare before us a living, palpitating human heart, a heart that is ill morally and physically, and the kernel of the story is flavoured by the combats and counter-combats of this heart in its physical and psychical aspects, in which the emotions of the one are fatal to the well-being of the other. and one has ultimately of necessity to destroy the other. In the end love conquers prudence with the result that the heroine, who fought against all deeper feelings and emotions, in order to preserve her physical heart intact, succumbs to her hereditary malady of heart-disease after some brief weeks of wedded happiness. This somewhat pathological narrative is related as a tense psychological study, a delicate and powerful piece of workmanship, which curiously enough outside of Italy has not met with the full recognition it deserves, when less valuable romances by the same writer have met with the honour of translation into almost every civilized language. The story is saved from being too painful by the most exquisite subtlety and delicacy of handling. In "La Conquista di Roma" the writer graphically makes manifest the curious fascination that a huge city exercises. A man who has lived in the distant wilds of the Basilicata, and is full of ardent ideals, is elected Deputy and goes up to the capital in the confidence that he will become a great

"Cuore Infermo."

A Story of Political Life.

moral force in the Chamber, without taking into account that potent defensive weapon of indifference, which guards every metropolis against similar ambitions. All too soon he is disillusioned, and an unfortunate love-affair combined with his political self-deception routs him entirely; saddened and disheartened he hands in his resignation and returns to vegetate in his native province. Had the element of illicit love been omitted, and his disillusionment been made to spring solely from his political fiasco, the book would have been more convincing; for, as it is, we may incline to think that had he not been led away by his passions, his earnest patriotism might have obtained for him a place, even if not so high a place as his ambition dreamed. But had this element of love, and especially illicit love, been omitted, it would not have been a novel by Matilde Serao, or, for the matter of that, an Italian novel, for the sensuous and sensual element exerts what is, to Northern ideas, an unduly preponderating part in Italian life and thought. In yet another book, "La Vita di Riccardo Joanna," is demonstrated the terrible attraction exerted by journalism and the tumultuous vari-coloured and fatiguing life led by those who exercise this profession, especially in Italy, where the Fourth Estate is heavily worked, poorly remunerated, and held in small social esteem. In "Il Paese di Cucagna" Matilde Serao treats of the Lotto and all that terrible Government gambling institution means for Italy, and above all for Naples and the poorer South. We see and hear the dense multitude that assembles every Saturday at two o'clock before the lottery booths, where the numbers drawn are posted up, rejoicing, imprecating, blaspheming, for or against their fate, caressing or cursing the magicians or witch doctors who have suggested to them good or bad numbers on which to play and stake their little all. It is this book which Paul Bourget caused his wife to translate, himself writing an introduction for the French public. He praises the writer's wonderful power of

Tales of Journalism and the Lottery Booths.

reproducing the very atmosphere that envelopes her characters, so that some of her pages can be placed beside those of that master of this art, the Russian Dostojewsky. In lauding her splendid capacity of causing masses to live in her pages he compares certain portions to the closely-packed multitudes seen in the frescoes by the fifteenth-century masters, such as Ghirlandajo and Benozzo Gozzoli.

Matilde Serao is so fertile that it is not possible in our limits to deal with all her books. Recently she deviated somewhat from naturalism, perchance due to Fogazzaro's influence, and has produced works in which a hybrid and rather maudlin mysticism predominates. To this departure we owe "Il Paese di Gesù," the record of a visit paid to Palestine in fulfilment of a vow made to the Madonna, and a few works of like import and small value. But this phase has not proved of long duration, for Matilde Serao has recently published a novel of the old type, "Suor Giovanna della Croce," whose purpose is to arouse sympathy for the nuns whom the suppression of convents has thrown helpless onto the world. But Matilde Serao is remarkable in yet another respect: she is not only a first-class journalist, but she is the first and only woman in Italy who has founded and runs successfully a daily political paper. This paper, "*Il Mattino*," is published at Naples, and as a rule supports the Government in power. Among women writers Matilde Serao undoubtedly takes the first place, and she alone has conquered the prejudice felt by the Italian public against female writers. Special and local reasons account for this prejudice, which is being slowly overcome as women become better educated and give proof of power, but which will fight hard, and perchance never entirely die out in a land where woman is looked upon as a man's toy, and has few social and civil rights. For these causes, too, there is no literature, properly so-called, for young girls. Only sickly, feeble, falsely sentimental rubbish is

A Departure from Naturalism.

A Brilliant Journalist.

penned for their perusal. Literature for children is also a strangely neglected branch. This explains the great success achieved by De Amicis' "Cuore," a book for boys about boys, which most healthy-minded Anglo-Saxon lads would, we fear, dismiss with the term "Twaddle." Indeed, to a Northern mind it is not easy to comprehend the great success that Edmondo de Amicis has achieved. A young officer of barely 20 when the new Italian State was in course of formation, it was natural that he should have become enamoured of the Army, the symbol and hope of the nation that was taking birth. Hence his first productions dealt with this theme and achieved instant success. Already in these first books, "Vita Militare," "Ricordi," and "Novelle," was manifest De Amicis' tendency to teach and preach. They aimed at showing that the Army and the nation should be united and that the heart of man is not sterilized by discipline. In these as in all his subsequent books his facility of speech often degenerated into prolixity. Clever and graphic descriptions are their main characteristics. From military tales De Amicis turned to travels, and here again his powers of minute observation stood him in good stead, but his observation rarely penetrates the surface, he does not illuminate, he does not make us understand the deeper meaning of a people and a landscape. He is essentially a delineator of mediocre intelligence whose defects are hidden by an elegant, easy style. In a book two volumes in length, entitled "Gli Amici," he unrolls a series of various types of friends, moralizing concerning them. This same tendency to over-minute description of minutiæ pervades "Il Romanzo di un Maestro," in which the difficulties of an elementary schoolmaster's life in Italian hamlets are presented with much truth. In "Sull' Oceano," too, he moralizes concerning the increase of Italian emigration, but without touching the real, deeper causes that provoke this exodus, and without entering upon the politico-economic questions that must be envisaged to treat adequately of this terrible social sore. In 1891

Edmondo de Amicis.

De Amicis, who had hitherto been a moderate Liberal, suddenly became a convert to Socialism, and thereupon wrote a number of pamphlets to propagate his new creed. But here, too, all his reasoning was superficial and he dealt with none of the scientific problems that Socialism presents. To this period belongs " La Carrozza di Tutti," a diary of twelve months' study of men and women met daily in an omnibus. His last book, like all his works, has gone into many editions, a sign that he hits the taste of a large section of his countrymen. It is called " L'Idioma Gentile." In it he advocates, and rightly, that the Italians should cultivate their lovely language with greater care and should not allow it to become defaced with Gallicisms and provincialisms. But here again where his theme is good, his method of treatment is intolerably diffuse. Briefly, De Amicis is an intellectual bourgeois, with all the merits and the defects of that social class.

The Songs of Ada Negri.

A word must still be said of the woman singer whose sudden advent on the lyrical horizon created a stir that re-echoed even outside the confines of Italy. Ada Negri, a little elementary school teacher in a tiny North Italian mountain hamlet, surprised the world by her volume " Fatalità," in which she sings with simple spontaneity of the sorrows and miseries of the workers of the soil and the factory hands. The metres are not always perfect, the fundamental ideas not new, but an accent of sincerity, of deep pathos, of sympathetic comprehension, pervades each poem. The same applies to her second volume, " Tempeste," in which the grinding, squalid lives of the poor were presented with incisive force. Verses written under such peculiar circumstances aroused interest for their author. She was transferred to a better-paying city school, and finally married a rich factory-owner, and was able to put her benevolent theories into practice. For a long while after her marriage her Muse was silent. Finally, however, she put forth a new volume called " Maternità," in which the joys and sorrows of motherhood are treated of

with a woman's deep intuition and delicate hand. Whether she will do much more, the future alone can show. Ada Negri's lyre has but few strings, but those it has ring true and command attention.

Another of the younger writers of whom on his first appearance on the literary horizon John Addington Symonds prophesied great things, is E. A. Butti. His novels, few in number, deal with psychological problems, but what renders him chiefly interesting is the fact that he is in the vanguard of that idealistic movement of which the new century is witnessing an inception in Italy, and which it is to be hoped will prove the death-knell of that school of uncleanness and lubricity of which D'Annunzio is the leader. Indeed were I asked to define in a sentence the trend of the latest thought in Italy, I should say that it is marked by a breath of that new Idealism that is making itself felt more or less in the literatures of all European countries. And these new ideals are manifesting themselves not only in letters but in Art, in Science, and in Life.

The Novels of Butti.

E. A. Butti is still not so widely known as he deserves to be, yet every new work from his pen arouses the keenest discussion, a fact that in itself proves that he is alive and touches life at its most vital point. An indomitable wrestler, a convinced believer, he advances his views with the undaunted conviction of an Apostle, and slowly but surely he is gaining a following. Every new work of his is a war-cry which always arouses respect even if it does not win universal applause. His first novel, "L'Autome," was already in the nature of a challenge. Its hero is one of those *dilettante* of life and art of which our era furnishes but too many examples, a neurotic whose actions are determined rather by his nervous impulses than by his reason or his principles. It was followed by "L'Anima," and in the interval of writing the two books it is evident that the author has wakened to the fact that all on this earth cannot be explained by science and materialism. The very title, The Soul, proves this. The hero is a scientist

and a materialist by conviction. A terrible illness forces him to revise his creed. He says " It is a narrow, dark prison without a door of egress to which science would fain confine us. It is impossible it should content Mankind, it is impossible that Man should struggle, suffer and sacrifice himself in the mere expectation of Death. . . . Truth, absolute Truth, begins precisely where our wisdom ends." The spiritual evolution of a thinker spirit who loses his faith in Matter and finds that Positivism is a limited and superficial theory, that the world cannot begin and end at the confines of human experience, is more than a work of art ; it is a sign of the times. The succeeding novel, " L'Incantesimo," is a demonstration of those contrasts and contradictions so often seen in the lives of superior men. After this book Butti turned his attention to the stage and in the section that treats of the theatre we shall meet with him again.

Biography and History.

Many and many names of excellent writers of verse and prose spring to my memory, but this chapter is not intended to be all-embracing. It only wishes to furnish some idea of the character and trend of modern Italian literary thought. Of critical studies, of biographies, of histories there is no lack, but few if any of these books can be said to attain to the dignity of pure literature, few if any are of that enduring type that would cause them to be read for their own sake apart from their themes. It is a curious fact, that hardly seems to fit in with the Italian temperament, that the more serious writers develop a pedantry of style and treatment such as we should rather look for among the learned Germans than among the more light-hearted and artistic Italians. To exiguous details of their national story vast tomes are dedicated. Undue stress is laid upon matters of secondary importance, there is none of that light handling and comprehensive generalization peculiar to the French. They are apt to look at matters too much in detail and not enough in the mass. They confound the secondary with the essential,

and lack individuality of touch and thought. Hence these products belong rather to the category of books of reference. Their authors are diligent, painstaking, sensible, but as a rule their power of synthesis is slender and their work will live rather as furnishing material for other craftsmen than for its own intrinsic merits. In all branches of social life organization and generalization are weak points with the Italians. It is curious to note how this defect makes itself felt also in those literary departments in which great and permanent work might be achieved. An exception to this censure is to be met with in the volume dealing with "Young Europe," written by the brilliant young criminal anthropologist, Guglielmo Ferrero, who is also now issuing a History of Rome (now being translated into English), where a notable departure is made from conventional historic methods.

Books for the Young.

In literature for the young, Italy lags far behind and cannot compare with England or America or Germany. It would almost seem as though the Latin mind could not, after maturity, regain its childish simplicity, for in France and Spain, too, children's literature is feebly represented. The few books that do exist in Italian are of a sickly sentimentality or assume a didactic character. "Pinocchio," by C. Collodi, and delightfully illustrated by C. Mazzanti (translated into English under the title "The Story of a Puppet") stands almost alone as a child classic. We find here none of those tales that inculcate a love of animals, such as are so common in England, if we except "Una famiglia di Topi," by Contessa Lara (Eva Cattermole Macini), herself more English than Italian.

Dialect Poetry.

On the other hand, a branch in which Italian literature is strong is dialect poetry. For though Tuscan, itself once only a dialect until Dante consecrated it as the spoken and written literary speech, is the official Italian of letters and life, each province still preserves its special methods of speech, which in some

cases are so far removed from written Italian that it is impossible not only for a foreigner but also for a native to understand them. Neapolitan, with its curious admixture of consonants, which in print almost look like Welsh; Genoese, with its Spanish-Arabic forms; Milanese with its clipped words and witty locutions may be given as examples. Each dialect seems to render the characteristics of the province in which it is spoken. All of them are still spoken, and not only by the people but by all classes of society. Many Italians have to learn their own language just like any foreigner and speak it with some hesitation, scarcely as though it were their mother tongue. A true artist on these lines is Cesare Pascarella who has narrated in a series of most witty sonnets in the Roman dialect the history of the discovery of America by Columbus. A natural gaiety and graceful satire distinguish the verses of Augusto Sindici, also a Roman, whose verses embody the legends of the Campagna. Excellent, too, are two Neapolitans, Salvatore di Giacomo, whose poems are imbued with the curious melancholy that runs through the Neapolitan character, and Ferdinand Russo, who, by contrast, shows forth their merry and witty side. In the Pisan dialect Renato Fucini has enshrined many of his experiences as school inspector, experiences that he has also told with inimitable verse and good humour in his short tales of Tuscan life, Alfredo Testoni reflects the briskness of the Bolognese temperament, and Barbarani the heavy melancholy of Verona, touched already by the sombreness of the north.

I have given a rapid, almost kaleidoscopic survey of modern Italian literature. Amid so much diversity there is only one point of unity and that is the inborn love of the Italian writers for form and finish. It has been said that what is not clear is not French: it can be added that what is not refined is not Italian. This tendency to artistic perfection may conceal some dangers, but it at least preserves Literature from that writing down to the taste of the mass that is so deplorable

Love of Form and Finish.

a feature of our democratic age. Literature in Italy seeks to elevate and draw its readers into serener and more classic spheres. It knows no slang, it tolerates no bad grammar, it exacts much from itself but it also demands something from its readers. And thus, despite all the deficiencies that have been pointed out, it is a power in the land and contributes to its mental elevation.

Photo by *Chas. Abéniacar, Naples*

A GROUP OF MODELS

CHAPTER IV

THE PAINTERS

THERE are certain stock phrases with which the tourist comes ready armed to Italy, and one runs "There is no modern Italian art." The date named at which this art came to an end, whether with the Venetian Tiepolo, or with Michel Angelo, depends upon the art critic upon whom the speaker pins his blind faith, whether he be called Ruskin, Morelli, or some of the minor lights.

Modern Italian Art.

Now, this stock phrase, like most parrot utterances, is both absurd and incorrect. It is true that art, like all else, was at a low ebb during the storm and stress period of the nation's political resurrection, but what the people who repeat this sentence *ad nauseam* forget is that this was thirty odd years, that is, a whole generation ago, and that in the meanwhile Italians have had time to learn and to reassert themselves in the domain in which they once held undisputed sway.

Of course, modern Italian art has nothing in common with the ancients. That must at once be realized and understood. On the other hand, in what other land is this the case? Do we not all adapt ourselves to the demands and requirements of our time. Why, therefore, ask from Italians that which would be an anachronism and an absurdity? Is it not rather to their credit that they have striven to strike out fresh pathways and do not attempt to walk in the footsteps of their glorious ancestors?

Yet, once again, the tourist is unfair.

The six International Art Exhibitions that have been held in Venice every other year since 1895 have admirably served to show the world how and where Italy stands. They have also been useful to the Italians as helping them to measure

themselves against their foreign rivals with excellent and healthful results.

It is true that if we judged from the local exhibitions and the shop windows some fifteen or twenty years ago the aspect of modern Italian art was discouraging. A school of clever painters had adopted a style of subject which, though taking and pictorial, was debased and trivial. The revels of soldiers and the rabble generally, the orgies of friars in the cellars of convents among huge tuns of wine, that made dark and mysterious backgrounds, and other such devices, occupied their time and their often brilliant talents. The powerful realism which made the work of the Dutch painters in something of the same line of subject immortal, was wanting in the work of the Italians. Their soldiers, peasants, friars, and inn-servants were not real creatures to the manner born. They were rather models dressed up to represent such personages and wanting in the one indispensable quality of art that is to last, namely, reality.

Wanting in Realism.

But this phase, though it still survives somewhat, since it has been proved to find a sale among a certain class of tourists, is happily on the wane, and even while it was at its height better things were being executed, though less ostentatiously and with less pecuniary success.

And here it is necessary at once to state that the regionalism, the provincialism, that is so fatal an element in Italian politics, also exists in the realms of art; the Venetian Art Exhibitions have, indeed, rather emphasized than discouraged this by assigning special rooms to each province for its exhibition. This is the more regrettable because signs are not lacking that these distinctions are in many respects about to disappear and to be merged into a renovated modern Italian art that shall hold high its banner of idealism, proving that in this domain too the sons are not so wholly unworthy of their sires as ignorant or prejudiced critics would have us believe.

Provincialism by Art Exhibitions.

For the moment, therefore, it is more convenient to follow the accepted divisions, the more so as undoubtedly each region has its characteristic local colour, that has by no means yet been obliterated; though from all these, when fused together, there does emerge a note that may be said to adumbrate a national character.

The revival of modern Italian art began at about the same epoch in Naples, Lombardy, and Tuscany. It was, however, curiously enough in Naples, still under the dominion of the miserable Bourbon kings, that there arose the man who fought poor and single-handed against the three prime articles of artistic faith held in that age of political despotism, pedantry, servility and bigotry. Domenico Morelli has lately passed over to the great majority, but his influence remains. With one accord he will be named as the leader of the Southern school. He is not only the man who has given it its direction, but he has also modified not a little all the other Italian schools. His name is known through all the length and breadth of the Peninsula, and there are partisans for and against his art to whom his very name is the signal for a hot combat, after the manner of the Guelph and Ghibelline. But it is the modern spirit that has conquered.

The Influence of Domenico Morelli.

It is, perhaps, well here to point out at once that the Neapolitan school of art has at all periods held traditions diverse from those that obtain in the rest of Italy. Probably the admixture of Greek blood in its population, the free life of the Abruzzi districts, the wild and romantic scenery of Calabria have conduced to this. Certainly there has always existed in this school much of the wild romanticism of southern *brio*, southern light-heartedness and gaiety and southern warmth and colour. Witnesses to the truth of this statement are Salvator Rosa, Luca Giordano, and Ribera, those fiery and audacious intelligences who placed imagination and tone above form. Something of this spirit survives in their

The Neapolitan School.

descendants and in no place is Italian art to-day more alive and active than in the city of enchantment that lies beside the lovely island-guarded, volcano-flanked gulf. Often extravagant in its exuberant fantasy, unfinished in its creative impetuosity, Neapolitan art nevertheless sings, dances and laughs in a bacchanalian orgy of colour and pleasure, of fervid sunshine and perfume that accords well with its cradle and its surroundings. Diverse in its forms of manifestation, one identical note distinguishes it, namely, colour, splendid, true and potent.

To these traditions Morelli proved true. Colour and light were his chief modes of expression and hence his works lend themselves ill to reproduction. He was one of the few artists, too, who fully recognised that Art, in order to be truly wide and great must go hand in hand with literature which supplies it with food for thought and fancy. It was the poets, but above all the English Byron, who inspired the pictures of his youth. It was the Bible that was the inspiration of all his later and finest work. Italian Art, above all other, found its source of inspiration in the sacred writings, and its pictures were some of the most potent auxiliaries of religion. With the decline of faith there was also a decline of Art, and now that we have entered another era, Art finds that the new ideals of humanity do not lend themselves sympathetically to its mode of expression ; we lament, and not without reason, that it wanders aimlessly without ideals or thoughts. Hence it was Morelli who recalled Art to sacred themes, and in so doing he has not, like English and French painters, followed in the beaten track ; instead, availing himself of the researches of modern criticism, of enlarged historical knowledge, he has succeeded instead in reproducing the Bible under a new aspect. His is no conventional treatment, as will be readily understood when I say that in Italy he is regarded as the Renan and Strauss of sacred Art. Following in the paths indicated by modern exegetical literature, he has striven not

The Ideals of Morelli.

to destroy, but to re-interpret the Gospel story in a manner no less poetical, no less divine, than that of his predecessors, but in a manner that has its roots in modern life.

And surely it is right that artists should follow in the new paths opened out to them by science and history. True, Théophile Gautier lays it down as an axiom, "En Art il n'y a pas de progrès." Not progress perhaps, but may it not be possible to produce a condition as good as the old, and since it is the feeling of the time that calls it forth, in that respect better, as more fitted to our comprehension. Or would he establish it as our duty merely to re-copy the work already done, to put forth servile imitations and vapid reproductions of old-world feelings and conceptions?

As Byron was the ideal of the youth Morelli, so the Gospel was the ideal of the man. He searched the New Testament deeply, sympathetically, critically, and thought intimately into the times and the life of Jesus. From the day that he first commenced this study it was his high aspiration to illustrate it by his paintings, but it was some time ere he held himself sufficiently ripe.

When Morelli first presented the Mother of the Redeemer under a human form, his picture created a vast sensation, not only among Art circles, but among the faithful. This Madonna, they readily saw, was unlike to those of Raphael or Fra Bartolomeo; she had little affinity with German or Byzantine Virgins, none with those of Botticelli and other great Italians. Morelli alone could claim this beautiful Hebrew woman, in whose veins ran warm Southern blood, as a direct descendant from his Madonna of the Assumption. At one blow the artist had broken down the chains of tradition, and this because he had followed history, not ecclesiastical legend; and so his Virgin was maid again in lieu of a fleshless, soulless being. Here, humanised, was seen the Rosa Mystica of Heaven as a young, proud, loving mother, earthy, and yet not wholly of the earth, neither she nor her

An Untraditional Madonna.

babe. It was divinity and humanity fused into one, and, at first, and even to this day, the critics have failed to follow Morelli's recondite fancies or do full justice to his poetical conception. Thus, in the "Salve Regina," the Virgin presses her baby to her breast and closes her eyes in very ecstasy of happiness. The outer world has nothing to reveal to her vision; her joy is all within, and she seeks to taste it unimpeded by impressions from without. The idea was perhaps too subtle for pictorial expression, and suited alone for literary exposition. Indeed, Morelli not unfrequently sins in this respect against the laws laid down by Lessing in his "Laocoön." Incapable of understanding, however, a large body of critics declared that the Virgin was asleep, and only the more delicate-souled apprehended what the artist had sought to express. All, however, concurred in praising the Child, who uprises secure and firm from the maternal embrace, while in His eyes flash signs of that potency, that divine charity and yearning which is the eternal beauty of the babe in Raphael's "San Sisto" Virgin, and which expresses here and there that this infant, more than a mere human child, is wrapt in thoughts that triumph above maternal caresses. It has been said that many of Morelli's pictures should be set to music rather than described. They touch just that borderland of the indefinite that is the domain of music, and which escapes under the clumsier touches of literature and Art.

Morelli's "Assumption."

One of Morelli's finest as well as most characteristic works is the "Assumption" he has painted for the roof of the Royal Chapel at Naples. In this picture his mode of thought and execution can be admirably studied. It was no easy task to treat this often-treated theme, and yet now that it is finished it reminds us of no school, no era, no previous representation. Before beginning upon the canvas Morelli read through the dreary waste of schoolman polemics, in which was discussed with all gravity, much ingenuity, some erudition, great

tediousness, and considerable length, the apparently important theological question, what was the colour of the dress worn by the Virgin on the occasion of the Assumption? When interrogated why he read such dull, stupid stuff, Morelli replied that he found by this means the mental atmosphere he required to put him into the proper frame of mind to conceive his picture. The work, as it now stands, is very large, indeed the artist's largest, and the principal figures are half the size of life. It is interesting to note how very few colours are employed in the composition. This was done designedly by the artist, who thought thus to give his work a more religious character. But few though these colours are, they are employed with such consummate skill that they never become monotonous. While painting the work, Morelli relates that he ever strove to keep before his mind the address to God, attributed by the Orientalist father, St. John of Damascus, to Mary at the Assumption, "Meum corpus tibi trado non terrae: salvum fac a corruptione in quo tibi placuit habitare."

Favourite Themes of the Painter.

Truly, Christ and the Virgin are Morelli's favourite themes, and he has presented them again and again under various forms. Mary, except in the Assumption, is always the mother. Of exquisite loveliness in feeling and design is a water-colour called "Da Scala d'Oro," in which the divine young Hebrew joyously descends the inlaid golden stairs of the Temple, holding on high her babe, who seems to crow with childish glee in the rapid movement, although his prematurely pensive face and his attitude of outstretched arms, adumbrating his future instrument of martyrdom, reveals the Redeemer of the world. It is a long, narrow, upright picture, painted on a gold ground, in which great distance is produced by the sight of the ever-receding stairs. Here we have to do rather with the "Mater amabilis."

Jesus we behold in different moments of His earthly sojourn. We see Him walking on the waters; we witness His entry

into the large square atrium where the daughter of Jairus is laid out for dead, with the women mourners crouching around her; we see Him standing under the shadow of an Eastern porch, in front of an open space flooded with fierce sunlight, bidding the woman taken in adultery depart in peace and sin no more, telling those that stand around and feel themselves guiltless to cast the first stone. Nowhere is there the remotest resemblance to former treatments of these well-worn themes, and not only is Morelli's conception original, but it carries with it that force of conviction which makes us feel that thus, and thus only, could the scene have really occurred.

Strong Intuition of Places and Types.

One of his most peculiar talents is a strong intuition of places and types he has never seen—so strong as to amaze those persons who come from the countries whence the subjects are taken. Thus, for example, the picture of "Jesus tempted of the Devil." Here is the vast, arid, sulphurous, stony plain of Judæa as it actually exists, with nought but volcanic erratic blocks to break its monotony of barrenness; the wilderness truly. The lurid light of the desert pervades the canvas, a light that can glimmer but dimly through the mist and dust of this dreary place, allegorising the sterility of the light of mere earth unillumined by higher influences. The background of the scene is void of anything living save four vultures that cower upon a distant rock hoping for prey. In the foreground appear the protagonists of the great drama, enacting the contending forces of Ahriman and Ormuzd, of good and evil, that still rend the world, and will rend it, until the last day of its existence.

Scenes from Christian History.

But no picture ever limned by Morelli has created the sensation produced by his "Temptation of St. Anthony," which, on its exhibition at Paris, was for weeks the talk of this aesthetic town. What is so subtle, so original, and so modern in Morelli's treatment of this by no means unhackneyed theme of the temptation of the founder

of monasticism, is that the temptation arises from within the man's own breast, and is not brought to him from without. The temptations suffered by St. Anthony were the hallucinations of his own imagination, aroused in him by abstinence and privation from all the joys of the flesh. As an Italian critic has well pointed out, Morelli has in a manner traversed the whole gamut of the history of Christianity. In his "Conversion of St. Paul" he reminded us how, in the person of this apostle, Christianity took doctrinal shape, and the Old Testament, the old civilization, retreated before the new. In "St. Anthony" we see that faith has touched the sublimest heights of sacrifice and is about to descend into prejudice. The whole range of the artist's work presents a reasoned series. No wonder the Neapolitan artists look up to him as their leader and that his influence for good and for evil has been potent.

The Art of Francesco Paolo Michetti.

If Morelli was the first among Neapolitan artists to emancipate himself from sterile traditions of every form and kind, he found a follower and successor in Francesco Paolo Michetti, who has left him far behind in the striving after originality of view and treatment. Influenced in a measure by Morelli, more perhaps by the Spaniard Fortuny, with his gipsy wildness and strangeness, Michetti is withal an artist of no common type whose manner and development are too personal and individual to be cramped into any school designation or marked off with any pedantic label. It is more than probable that his influence has not been wholly to the good upon modern Italian painting; it is possible that he is rather the outcome of an Art arrived at maturity, an Art that loves to allow itself caprices and fantasies, than of a tendency that is fecund and robust. That he is not a good all-round artist, that he is a better colourist than draughtsman, that he is audacious at times to the point of impertinence, all this and more may be urged against him, but when the worst is said, there remains a painter whose work is *hors ligne*, and whom it is as impossible

to ignore as it is impossible to withhold admiration from the marvellous works that emanate from his brain and brush.

It is only a "paradisaical pandemonium," as an Italian writer aptly calls Naples, that could produce a genius so *bizarre*, so complex and apparently incoherent, so rich, so facile, and so strange. For some years the name of Michetti sounded to Italian ears as the expression of everything that is new, unexpected, hair-brained, and extravagant. His name is synonymous with brilliant stuffs and dazzling flesh tints, conjoined to shadows of dark cobalt; of clashing tones designedly sought out; of delicious child faces patiently caressed by a cunning brush; of full-bodied women inundated in an atmosphere of sun and heat; of landscapes created in the brain of the artist, where trees cast no shade, or shades are cast by trees outside the canvas; in short, synonymous for Tiepolesque hardihood and Japanese ingenuity; for strange and unusual frames; for a carnival of comic personages; for peasant idyls scorched by a Southern sun; all this pervaded by a youthful freshness of power, an artistic good-humour that tells of an artist unburdened by thought, but rich in strength and creative ability. It has been said that most artists have their eyes in their brain; of Michetti it might be said that he has his brain in his eyes.

His Complex Genius.

Francesco Paolo Michetti was born in 1851 at Chieti, in the Abruzzi Mountains, that Italian district which to this day the newer civilization has not touched, where Catholicism has but veneered the ancient paganism, where progress is a word of unknown meaning, and personal liberty unesteemed. His art education was received at Naples, but he also travelled, visiting Paris and even London—though that nebulous city could not hold for long an artist to whom sunshine, not to say daylight, is the first requisite. So at last he returned to his native Abruzzi, where he resides to this day, and here he painted and paints the strangely curious works inspired by

Life and Work of Michetti.

the life of the Abruzzi peasants, his art, like their lives, dividing itself between church festivals and the free out-door existence of the woods and fields. On this account his pictures are interesting and valuable as human documents. His secular scenes should be supplemented by the foreign spectator with the works of his compatriot and ardent admirer, the writer, Gabriele D'Annunzio. They would then better comprehend his Abruzzi pastorals in which there pulsates all the untutored, sensuous, fiery, passionate blood of these Southerners. What a tragedy in colour is, for example, "La Figlia di Jorio," which inspired D'Annunzio's play of the same name; the peasant maiden who slinks along with downcast eyes and shame-faced attitude upon the field-path that is skirted by idling, reclining peasants, who jeer and gibe at her as she goes by!

An Original Picture.

The picture that revealed the full strength of his powers, and which made his fame, was the "Corpus Domini Procession at Chieti," exhibited in the Naples Exhibition in 1876. The work roused an indescribable sensation. It burst upon the Art world like an effect of fireworks; it attracted and amazed at the same time. Here was a creation both original and potent, that could be placed in no category as yet known, either for idea or treatment, for the picture is painted in oil, water-colour, and guazzo. It was certainly in no wise academic; it might be classed as impressionist—but even here Michetti follows no school, but gives his individual impression solely. Now that out-door religious demonstrations are forbidden in the towns of Italy, only those who have had the good fortune to spend early summer in the country districts may have seen one of the impressive and picturesque Corpus Domini processions—processions concerning whose deeper meaning and purpose not even the most devout Catholic can furnish an explanation. Michetti's picture, in which the ripe colour, the full voluptuousness of the South has free play, furnishes some clue perchance to the query. It is just as pagan as

anything we could hope to see by putting on Hans Andersen's "Goloshes of Happiness," wishing ourselves back into the heyday of Greek life, and assisting at one of the national festivals. Here in the Abruzzi we are almost in Magna Græcia, and the paganism of those days can scarcely be said to be effaced. The astuteness of the Catholic Church has merely laid a varnish over ancient ceremonies by giving a different name to external ordinances that, to all intents and purposes, are the same as those practised some two thousand years ago, when man was younger and the world more gay.

Later Work of Michetti.

After the great and widespread success Michetti had achieved with his large "Corpus Domini" picture, he continued to work with renewed fervour and zeal, throwing into his labour all his juvenile strength, all the impetuousness of his Southern nature. He burned with the desire to produce, ever to produce, to fix on canvas the number and variety of impressions of sea, sky, air, and earth, which were daily brought before his vision at his beauteous Italian home, that inexhaustible fount of artistic loveliness. Working in such hot haste, in a manner so careless, more anxious to preserve an impression than to complete a picture, it is quite natural that his ardour and fantasy at times overcame his judgment, and caused him to put forth now and again works that, for audacity and wilfulness, display the slipshod draughtsmanship of the most *outré* school of impressionism. All these tendencies, however, in the case of Michetti, were combined with a truer sense of beauty, a richer faculty for colour, than falls to the lot of most impressionists, who seem to see nothing but dirty greys and greens in nature and Art. Michetti's impressionist pictures rather resemble the *chef d'œuvre* of which Balzac speaks, which having mounted to the brain of the artist who created it, in the end shipwrecks him in the undecipherable—a shipwreck from which he only saves a foot most admirably painted, as token of what the whole figure had been before the intoxication of the artist with his own

work had overturned his artistic and critical faculty. But, happily, caprice, though it is the guiding star of this Southern nature, does not often lead him into these *baroque* vagaries.

Another picture of his, as famous as the Corpus Domini procession, is "Il Voto." It represents a number of peasant men and women who, to carry out a vow made either at their own instigation or at that of some priest, creep on their hands and knees along the church floor, licking the same with their tongues, until they arrive at the altar steps, where, on a carpet surrounded by tapers, stands the ghastly skull of St. Pantaleone, all encased in gold and jewels. The mouths of the votaries—often also the hands and knees—are all blood-stained and torn ere they arrive at their destination; but the greater the laceration, the higher the merit of their act in the eyes of the poor, benighted people. It is a scene to make the blood curdle, to cause us to despair of progress and enlightenment; and it is remarkable indeed that it should have been painted of all men in the world by Michetti, whose brush seemed dedicated to the brighter, lighter, happier aspects of South Italian life. In this country church—perhaps a sanctuary on the summit of some hill—we behold a peasant population sunk in all the ecstatic convulsions of a blind, stupid, and ignorant credulity—a credulity that recalls the darkest ages of barbarism, and seems too remote from all higher and finer aspirations to be dignified with the name of faith. The picture might be designated as the apotheosis of grovelling superstition.

"Il Voto."

Of late Michetti has not exhibited much, but he is never idle. He loves to occupy himself with pursuits outside of his own sphere; for instance for a whole year he did nothing but bicycle. His fervent imagination shows itself in many bye-paths, as, for example, the carpet he planned on one occasion when Queen Margherita came to Naples. The foundation was of blue velvet, to represent the lovely blue seas that surround Italy

The Painter's other Pursuits.

on either side; the peninsula itself was outlined in gold, and branches of marguerites were painted to indicate the chief cities. Each was the work of an artist. Michetti painted the posy that should stand for Naples. He painted it most exquisitely; indeed, the whole was such a work of Art that the Queen, when it was thrown down for her, saw it, admired, and then stepped aside. She would not walk, she said, on such artistic treasures. The whole idea of such a carpet is thoroughly Neapolitan, and reflects their love of splendour, of rich colour, of *bizarre* and often quaint effects.

"The great difficulty with which we Neapolitan painters have to contend," one of the most eminent of these said to me a while ago, "is the vivid natural colouring of our superb bay. Even dwellers in the northern parts of Italy are apt to think our productions untrue to life, and hence how much more so you who abide in the foggy North, where the sun does not bring out effects with the untempered crudeness it does with us." These words are, indeed, most true, and herein may perhaps lie the reason why that vigorous and most active school of painters which modern Naples has evoked, has not at present found sufficient recognition north of the Alps. Among these painters Edoardo Dalbono also takes a leading place. He has made Naples the town and its history peculiarly his own. One of his earliest as well as most famous pictures treats of the Excommunication of Manfred, King of Sicily, son of the Emperor Frederick II of Germany, a figure that seems from all times to have exercised a strong fascination over Italian poets, romance writers, and painters. Who does not recall Dante's splendid description* of how Manfred in person relates to his visitor the details of his lineage, his death at the great decisive Battle of Benevento, his dishonourable burial, due to the fact that he died in "contumacy of Holy Mother Church"? The other is the

Vivid Colouring of Neapolitan Painters.

The Pictures of Dalbono.

* Purg. 3, 112, et seq.

Photo by *S. J. Beckett, F.R.P.S.*

A STREET SCENE IN SOUTHERN ITALY

"Island of the Sirens," a picture that, like the "Manfred," aroused fierce controversies. It was, if possible, a yet more dramatic presentation of an old-world fable. The Sirens are at home in the Gulf of Naples; we feel this painter has seen them, has listened to their seductive song; there is an originality, a truth about this mode of presentation, that strikes the beholder with wonder and admiration.

Dalbono's sketches are as remarkable as his pictures. They embrace every phase of the Neapolitan atmosphere and life, including the most lovely and the most repulsive types of that strange population—old sailors, weather-worn and wind-dried; youthful forms, graceful and like bits of living bronze; bodies so well made it is difficult to believe they are not Greek sculptures come to life; women fair, dark, yellow, white and brown; in a word, types of that seething, over-populated corner of Southern Italy, on which all-levelling civilization has not yet set its seal.

Neapolitan Types.

The sea of Naples and Naples women are Dalbono's strong points. The latter he produces with potent touches in all their distinct peculiarity. For the Naples woman is quite a type apart from other Italians. She is *voyante*, her form is much developed; she combines Eastern luxuriance with Greek severity in a manner that must be seen to be understood. Her full, rich lips, her passionate eyes tell that she loves luxury and gaiety, and nevertheless there is about her a softness, an abandonment, an indolence, that makes us scarcely prepared to find her so energetic and quivering with life.

I have dealt thus fully with these three characteristic and prominent painters because I believe that thus rather than by cataloguing a long list of names is it possible to give an idea of the nature of modern Neapolitan art. But it must not, therefore, be supposed that the Neapolitan regions produce no other men worthy of mention. There are, to enumerate a few, Vincenzo Caprile and Alceste Campriani, interpreters of Neapolitan

Other Painters of this School.

street and country life, the delicate and subtle observation of Pratella, Esposito with his notable seascapes, Brancaccio the water-colourist, who reproduces with keen vivacity the animated popular customs of the lively town, Buono who paints its fishermen and their manners, de Sanctis who presents its lovely views, and many others.

One note they have more or less in common, and that is a love for colour and a local patriotism that causes them to select for their pictures reproductions of the scenes that surround them.

Sicilian Art.

Sicily, closely allied to Naples by geographical position and in the matter of sunlight and vivid colouring, has produced few local artists either in the past or in the present, perhaps because owing to the unhappy political conditions, the ill effects of which still survive in that enchanting island, her talented sons were forced into exile. She can make boast, however, of the Palermitan Francesco Lojacono, whose "Oyster Fishers" obtained for him an instant success. He belongs, perhaps, rather to the older than the ultra-modern school, but he is a careful and observant artist.

Able, too, is the pastel painter, de Maria Bergler, nor must Paolo Vetri, a Sicilian by birth, a Neapolitan by marriage and habitation, be left unnamed, for he has proved himself a rarely skilful and tasteful decorator of churches and public edifices.

Roman Painters.

It is a curious fact that the Roman painters, in contradistinction to their southern colleagues, possess no dominant accent, either in form or spirit; it is yet another instance of the remarkable atavism which pervades all Italian life, that the same may be said of Roman art in the past centuries. Never, even in the most glorious days of Italian art, was there really a Roman school of painting. There were individual painters in Rome, and there are individual painters now, but there is no Roman school

Well known in England, and perhaps even more appreciated there than in Italy, is Giovanni Costa, lately dead, the friend of Lord Leighton, with whom he had certain pictorial affinities, as, for example, in the hardness of his drawing and a certain harshness of colour. Setting this aside, however, the man was a poet with his brush and rendered with rare comprehension the subtle effects of Nature revealed by the bare sunburnt Roman Campagna, and by the classic landscapes of the Sabine and Alban Hills. Indeed, Costa was in a measure the founder of a school of Roman landscape painters, for his influence is distinctly felt in the work of the younger men, and especially among those who paint in water-colour; all of them treat landscape in what I may be allowed to call the modern manner, that is, subjectively,—landscape passed through the alembic of their individual brain. The often weird and mysterious Roman landscape has also been handled with poetic and suggestive touches by Vitalini, a young painter who perished miserably in 1905 during a mountain excursion. His coloured etchings are exquisite bits, revealing a rare security of touch and felicity of choice in theme and treatment. Of late he had also turned his attention to the Venetian Lagoons. A lover, too, of the solemn austerity of the Roman Campagna is Enrico Coleman, who, despite his English surname, is a true Roman. He loves to people these vast wastes with the shaggy race of horses that they breed and the rough picturesque keepers who herd them. A representative of the older style of anecdote painting is Jacovacci, who selects historical moments for his themes; while the over-elaborated and dressed-up manner is represented by the works of Maccari, a Sienese by birth, a Roman by election, who, among other matters, has frescoed the walls of a room in the splendid old Palazzo Pubblico of Siena with scenes from the history of Italy's latest political resurrection.

But the only Romans beside Costa who enjoy a European

fame, and who are really notable, are Antonio Mancini, who has exhibited in the Royal Academy, and Aristide Sartorio, who was called to Germany as Professor of the Weimar Art School.

Antonio Mancini.

Mancini is like to no one but himself, and his pictures wherever seen provoke the fiercest controversy. He is *bizarre*, he is mannered, he is eccentric, whatever you will, but despite this there is behind it all a man of strong will and marked individuality who disdains no means to arrive at the results he desires. He will insert into his coloured mass pieces of glass, of tin, of lead, clarinet keys, and what not besides, to obtain certain effects of light that appear to him unattainable with the brush, he will lay on his colours as with a trowel. No matter, he holds us in his grip because of the plastic vigour of the whole, the keen sense of vitality that emanates from all he touches.

Aristide Sartorio is of a very different stamp. He lost himself at first in the marsh of Spanish art as represented by Fortuny, whose facile influence has been rather disastrous over the younger Italian men. By a virile effort he liberated himself from this leading and strengthened his soul by drawing inspiration from the best examples of the Italian Renaissance. After this he learnt to know and to esteem the *chef d'œuvres* of current French art, and finally he was uplifted and chastened by contact with the English pre-Raphaelites, notably D. G. Rossetti and Burne-Jones. His most personal note are his exquisite pastels of the Roman Campagna, in which it is evident that an intense love for his natal earth has dictated these colour poems of delicate thought and sentiment. In these, beside an individual mode of feeling, there is also an individual touch of technique. In his fantastic and allegorical pictures a pessimistic chord is struck. The prevailing idea of the artist seems to be that there exists a maleficent element that torments, crushes and destroys all mankind. In the Roman Gallery of Modern Art may be seen his grand diptych "Diana of Ephesus and the Slaves," and also "The Gorgon,"

who looks on men only to destroy them, both emphasizing these ideas. But whether a philosopher or a landscape poet, Sartorio is always interesting, suggestive and attractive, a glory to his profession and to Rome, an intellectual artist of wide literary culture and refined taste.

The Art of Piedmont.

Piedmont has never had a great art school in the past. Such painters as she possessed belonged rather to the minor lights, and this observation remains true until to-day. The Piedmontese have been men of action, hard thinkers, rather than poets and dreamers, and the strength and the rigidity that distinguishes them makes itself felt in their art. It is perhaps this trait that inclines them so markedly toward landscape. Landscape-painting, and especially the painting of the scenery of the Alpine foot-hills that shelter Turin exercises over these artists a never-ending attraction. Chief among them stands Marco Calderini, who understands so perfectly how to extract from a landscape, no matter how humble, its deeper spiritual meaning. And this is, perhaps, the Piedmontese keynote. An intimate spiritual strain seems to pervade their delineations of nature, and as far as technique is concerned this is usually rendered with a robust vigour that is quite unlike the Tuscan or Venetian treatment of landscape scenes. Indeed, the truth of Amiel's words is once more made manifest when he says of landscape-painting: "Chaque paysage est un état d'âme."

Curious that in a united kingdom each province should thus retain a more or less individual physiognomy. There still exist in Piedmont followers of the old school of technique and of theme, of carefully elaborated details and serio-comic narrative subject, but Piedmont has also its rebels, who, throwing overboard all tradition, and anxious to produce new light effects, employ as their medium a prismatic decomposition of colours which obliges the spectator's eye to recompose the whole into a unity of effect. Some do this with broad splashes of colour, others with minute dots, with

the result that the picture resembles either a Byzantine or a Roman mosaic.

Giacomo Grosso.

No Piedmontese artist is more talked of than Giacomo Grosso, or, with a certain section, more popular. His robust and rather rough talent makes itself felt especially in his portraits, painted with unquestionable ability, but with a desire rather to flaunt his own dexterity than to reproduce faithfully the features of his model. Thus he loves to turn a picture into a symphony of related colours, or of one dominant tint; with a result that is not always happy for the subject, as in his famous picture of the Duchess of Aosta, where the whole canvas is bathed in a light violet hue. His subject pictures have often scandalized, for example, his "Last Meeting," at the Venice Exhibition of 1895, where a dead Don Juan lies upon his bier and is surrounded by a group of his victims, a melodramatic and insincere work that scarcely merited all the excitement, the discussions as to place of the nude and so forth that it evoked.

Lombardy's Great Painter.

Closely allied to Piedmont geographically and mentally is Lombardy, and it is to Lombardy that Italy owes the most robust and original painter after Morelli and Michetti that she can boast of in this century. I refer to Giovanni Segantini, who died in 1901, in his forty-fourth year, a victim to his ardour to study in the depth of winter the snow he so loved on the virgin Alpine heights. Born at Arco, on the Italian frontier, in 1858, he was the son of very poor parents, who left him orphaned at a tender age. Ill-treated, he fled from home into Lombardy, where he obtained a post as swineherd. It was while following this occupation, like a second Giotto, that his talent was revealed to himself and to others. But, unlike Giotto, he found no rich patron and it was by sorry expedients, the painting of blinds and sign-boards and what not else, that at last he was able to enter the Milanese Art Academy. His first work, painted for lack of means to buy canvas on

the back of an old fire-screen, with colours obtained from a friendly grocer in return for a shop sign, represented the Choir of Sant' Antonio. It instantly excited interest and revealed at a flash the vigour that is Segantini's pictorial characteristic. What a critic said at the time of this picture holds good throughout the whole of Segantini's marvellously productive if too brief career. "Taken all in all a genius that has developed itself from out of its own strength, unhampered by the scholastic principles that but too often serve to modify if not to choke the expression of original inspiration."

And, indeed, the Academic chains could not bind him. He soon freed himself even from the Academy itself, and from the stifling atmosphere of city life, pitching his tent in the lovely Brianza district that flanks the Italian lakes. Here was begun that devotion to the study of rural life and landscape that was to become his distinguishing feature. Here he painted his first pastorals, idyllic in composition and colouring; here he found his ideals. To quote his own words, "An art without ideals is like Nature without life."

The Ideals of Segantini.

But if he had found his ideals he had not yet found his technique. His colour scheme was sombre, resembling that of the Milanese Cremona, the artist who was the true father of Lombard modern art, and resembling also that of the Frenchman Millet, with whom all through his life Segantini had such curious psychic affinity although it was long after art critics had already classed him as a follower and imitator of Millet that he first saw a work of that painter.

As he advanced in his art there also increased in him an imperative craving after solitude. The Brianza became too populous for his taste, and he was drawn upwards towards the Alps of the Grisons, the outlines of which he could see upon the horizon. Here he founded for himself a home, and for years worked quietly, steadily, industriously, with no society but that of his wife and children. When at last even the heights of Savognino did not suffice him, he removed

his lares and penates to the Maloya, 6,000 feet above sea-level, at the head of the Engandine tableland, where he could dwell within constant vision of the everlasting snowfields and glaciers that exercised such a weird attraction over his fantasy.

It would prove wearisome to enumerate all that he painted and drew in these years. I will but mention a few of his most noted Alpine scenes. "The Drinking Trough" (gold-medalled at Paris), "Ave Maria" that received the same honour in 1883 at Amsterdam, "Sheep-shearing," "Ploughing" (exhibited in London in 1888), "The Day's Last Labour," "The Return Home": this last a pathetic picture that enshrines an ancient Alpine custom, which is that a mountain dweller should be brought back by his own people to lie among them if he has died below in the plains. In Segantini's picture a bearded mountaineer leads by the bridle a shaggy horse that is drawing a cart on which a coffin is corded. Upon it is seated the bitterly weeping young widow of the dead man, holding their little son upon her knee. The driver walks with bowed head and slow step. He is garbed in the cloak which, inherited from generation to generation, and in accordance with immemorial custom, is only brought out for wear upon such mournful days. Rain-sodden and muddy is the pathway that skirts the mountains, the covering sky is of leaden hue. Only the purple sheen of the glaciers, suffused with the last tints of sunset, contribute a dash of colour to enliven the gloomy scene.

Alpine Scenes.

It has been objected that the landscape with its giant Alps embraces too vast a space, diverting attention from the picture's chief *motif*, the little group of mourners. But this was exactly the artist's intention. It is this that distinguishes his pictures from the conventional genre scenes. He wished to emphasize the impression just by this contrast of the punyness of human existence with the solemn grandeur of eternally enduring nature.

In all these representations of simple pastoral life Segantini showed himself as thoroughly in sympathy with his subjects and the note he has thus introduced into Italian art is one that had been quite foreign to it. What Millet did for France Segantini did for Italy, that is, he devoted his art to the cause of the poor and lowly and faithfully depicted the life of the peasants, not dressed in their best with conventional smiling faces, obviously sitting for their portraits, but peasants in their daily existence, in work and sorrow and joy, with the unheeded tragedy and unconscious poetry of the simple peasant life.

During his last years Segantini modified his style as well as his technique and his colouring. He inclined towards symbolism, suppressing details and endeavouring to embody ideas, and he did this in the manner of the elder Italian Primitives. It was a curious transformation this, the painter of realistic peasant life turned dreamer. Among these pictures are "The Punishment of Luxury" and "The Retribution of Unnatural Mothers"—both themes inspired by an Indian poem, and "The Angel of Life," clearly permeated with the influence of Botticelli.

Segantini's Later Style.

His further development, his further contributions to Art, remain among the sad "might have beens" of Life. He who so loved the snow died from its effects, was borne to his grave in a heavy snow-storm, and laid to rest in the little mountain God's-acre he painted on one of his last canvases, a snow scene entitled "Faith Comforting Sorrow."

After Segantini, Filippo Garcano is considered the leader of the young Lombard school. Realism is his characteristic: landscape is his strong point. His landscapes, however, as might be expected from a realist, are objective rather than subjective, revealing themselves to him from a somewhat panoramic point of view. Hence he is peculiarly well fitted to render the impressions produced by the vast, endless Lombard plains

Filippo Garcano.

with their luminous harmonies of light effects. Eugenio Gignous and Pompeo Mariani are also able landscapists, while Mosé Bianchi, who belongs rather to the older school, has painted with sympathetic comprehension the rural incidents of existence in that fertile country.

Original, on the other hand, is Gaetano Previati, both for his technique and his themes. He is a Ferrarese by birth, but by domicile a Lombard. In him we meet with yet another modern Italian who has been touched by the Pre-Raphaelite influence. Curious that this return to the Italian Primitives should have needed to take the road viâ England and France to influence the land of its origin! Of a restless mental disposition, endowed with fervent imagination, intolerant of routine or vulgarity, his pictures impress by their distinction even if they are not always sympathetic. A searcher and an experimenter, he is not invariably successful though ever interesting, for his aim is to render his art a suggestive synthetic vision of feelings and of ideas. Two pictures of his especially remain in my memory. First, the "Madonna of the Lilies," which attracted so much attention at that Venice Exhibition when a whole room was set apart for Previati's works. It has all the merits and all the defects of this original and elect master. Much discussion has this picture aroused; some think that it is too flat, the rows upon rows of ascension lilies that flank the mother and child too symmetrical and too monotonously alike, too slightly painted. The fact is, the artist desired to render the impression of a vision, no corporeal reality, and hence he has not striven after exactitude so much as to give a feeling that the whole is bathed in a golden light, resulting in a harmonious tranquillity such as is found in certain calm compositions of the Primitives. That the canvas is on too large a scale for the theme I am willing to admit, but that is a modern fault induced perhaps by the demands of Exhibitions and the need to strike the vision of the hurried visitor.

Gaetano Previati.

The second picture to which I refer is called "The Funeral of the Virgins." It shows an endlessly long procession of white-veiled maidens, flower-garlanded, who accompany to her grave a lost companion. A spirituality of vision, and a tender melancholy permeate the whole, which is redeemed from too great sadness by its fantastic delicacy.

Lesser Artists.

An original artist is Vittore Grubicy de Dragon, a strenuous champion of the Divisionist theories which he treats, however, in an individual manner, unlike that of his French predecessors. He is also a powerful etcher, an able critic who keeps abreast with the modern art movement of Europe, and a landscapist of curiously personal character.

Names crowd to my memory but the exigencies of space forbid me to catalogue. A word in passing, however, for Giuseppe Mentessi, the artist of mystic suavity and spiritual grace. Indeed, if we desire to synthesize the Lombards we must take note of this leaning to the abstruse, the visionary, that distinguishes the best men and which may be a result of their northern affinities, the intermixture of Austrian blood in the population and the neighbourhood of the Alps.

A Great Landscape Painter.

And yet a word concerning an artist who, though he has been dead a quarter of a century, is only just being discovered and appreciated by his compatriots. I refer to the landscape painter Fontanesi, who might be defined as the last of the great school of Turner and Constable, a direct descendant from Claude Lorraine, a man above all a poet, one enthusiastic of Leonardo's maxim, "La pittura è una poesia che si vede" (Painting is poetry that can be seen). His works, painted like those of the Quattrocentisti on a prepared guezza ground, are as luminous to-day as when first put on canvas. And though he puts in figures with his landscapes, they are mere *staffages*, mere accessories placed there as if to bring into greater relief the inferiority of Man as compared with the

portentous miracle of Nature. Fontanesi did not merely search after the solution of technical problems like his comrades of the epoch—he sought also after a perfection of conception in the construction of his pictures. He knew how to choose, how to eliminate, how to concentrate, with a sureness of instinct that is almost Japanese. He had a love for vast horizons, for open, rolling moorland, for noble massing of verdure, for the fulgid sweep of skies, for the horizon of the looming storm, for wide spaces of light and shadow. His work is full of sentiment, yet totally devoid of sentimentality. There is a verve, a vigour, a certainty in his touch, a breadth and sanity and suavity that lifts them high.

The Modern Tuscan School.

To pass from the Lombards to the Tuscans is to pass from winter into spring. Their salient characteristic is a rare elegance of draughtsmanship coupled with a gentle delicacy of tints and tones, such as is revealed in the lovely hillsides of Tuscany where the green of the foliage is silvered with the grateful greyness of the olive. Curiously enough the famous "cradle of the arts," as Dante calls Florence, was one of the last in Italy to follow the latest pictorial manifestations, and far too long her annual local Art Exhibitions were crowded with licked and smoothed canvases dealing with petty themes, devoid of ideals or ideas and appealing chiefly to the uncultured tourist and the oleograph reproducer.

Nevertheless, even while this deplorable art seemed to hold the upper hand, there were men quietly, unobtrusively and unselfishly working towards better ends. The man, however, to whom modern Tuscan art owes its liberation is the recently deceased Telemaco Signorini.

Liberator of Tuscan Art.

An Italian writer, speaking of this artist, one day defined him in Dante's phrase as "un Fiorentino spirito bizarro" (that exasperate spirit Florentine), intending to emphasize with the adjective *bizarro* the eminently original character of this artist's genius. This originality placed Signorini at the head and

forefront of that progressive, not to say revolutionary, movement in Tuscan art which helped it to throw off the empty fetters of the Academy.

The son of an artist, born in 1835, Telemaco was home-taught and so never passed through the trite Academic curriculum. His first exhibited picture (1861), "The Venetian Ghetto," was a note of defiance flung at the authorities and marked the beginning of the rebellion Signorini effected in the tents of art. It was a gauntlet flung at all the ancient Academic formulas, at worn-out systems, at antiquated precepts.

But even before this Signorini had become enamoured of the *Macchia*,* as the impressionist school, then but dawning, was nicknamed by the Tuscan artists. One of their number had imported it from Paris, where it was then practised in its earlier, milder form.

The Macchiaioli.

Now, one of the creeds of this brotherhood was that teaching is both useless and pernicious; hence, of course, they took no pupils. The fundamental basis of their creed was that each man must work out his individuality in his own way, and study to accentuate his individuality rather than suppress it. Like their French brethren, the Macchiaioli went into the country to study, to work, to seek for new effects of light. The sight of washing hung out on a line in which the white of the clothes was accentuated against the background of a grey wall or of green trees, was sufficient to send them into ecstasies. The themes of their pictures were subjects as trifling and common as a flock of sheep facing the sun; a hill with the sun behind it; the blot that an ox makes standing in the middle of a field or crossing the road at mid-day in the month of July, and so forth. But trifling though these subjects seem, they were always useful in that search after truth, after values,

* In Italian the word *Macchia*, which means literally a spot, is a term applied to underwood, or a small forest, as well as to the impressionist painters, and to blotches and spots of any kind.

after *chiaroscuro*, to which the Macchiaioli had dedicated themselves.

Of this band Telemaco was the most convinced and the most advanced; impatient of any scholastic yoke, entirely enamoured of the Macchia, he flayed with his pungent powers of irony and his biting words the youthful product of the Academy of Fine Arts who ventured to oppose their academic ideas of Art to his rule-of-thumb experiments. He even ventured to poke fun at venerated masterpieces, pointing out where the great past masters had gone astray, where they had departed from nature. He argued and talked and ridiculed until many a one gave in, not always because he was convinced, but because he feared to appear absurd and not in accordance with modern ideas. And it was in this way that in Tuscany the new views concerning Art conquered the old.

Signorini Champions the New Views.

Nor was it with words alone that Signorini fought for his theories. He confirmed them with his pictures, though most often at first they remained unsold and were passed over by the art critics of the day with glacial silence. But he was not discouraged, and worked on undaunted, pruning his youthful extravagances, but ever remaining faithful to his love of truth as he understood it.

And gradually his work found favour both in and out of Italy. Indeed, his works were soon in great request in the English market.

In 1888 he first visited Scotland, for which he at once conceived a great liking. There on the spot he painted his impressions of Edinburgh, but it was not the modern monumental Edinburgh he painted, but the characteristic, squalid, dirty, close quarters of Auld Reekie. Besides producing the effects of the surroundings, the difficult values of fog, Signorini also wanted to reproduce the street types, the Highland soldier and the beggar lassie. He who had understood to render

Scottish Scenes.

so well the atmosphere, moral and physical, of the Ghetto of Venice, the Ghetto of Florence, and the Ponte Vecchio, he who is a master in the drawing of dirty, narrow, squalid alleys and bye-ways, found that old Edinburgh excited his fantasy and imagination to the last degree. He has rarely done better work than in his Edinburgh pictures. This picturesque speciality of Signorini's, combined with an excellent technique, constitutes his characteristic individuality as an artist.

A Realist by Conviction.

In all Signorini's works, and they are very numerous, even the most superficial spectator cannot fail to notice that each of these impressions is received direct from Nature, and that they are not mere renderings of the surface of things but put down after their creator has penetrated their inner meaning, their soul. And having himself a straightforward mind that conceives without subtleties, he also put down his impressions in his canvas with a certain directness which was almost crude but which at all times was forcible, bold and effective. There were no half-phases in Signorini's presentments, and this made itself felt above all in his treatment of lights and shadows. He never diluted his methods of expression, as his countrymen are apt to do, enamoured as they are of rhetoric. Nor did Signorini ever stop for a moment to consider whether his subjects were likely to please. He was a realist by conviction and despised work made up to please others.

Ussi and Fattori.

Side by side with Signorini there worked in the cause of reform Stefano Ussi, also lately dead, and that Nestor of Tuscan artists, Giovanni Fattori, still living and working. Ussi, however, though he joined the rebel camp, was by temperament rather of the older school, and his pictures, which at first gained him much fame and aroused some clamour, steadily declined in artistic value as time progressed. Not so Fattori, who though born in 1828, had so well learnt his lessons from Costa, was so intolerant of the Academic yoke, that even to-day, when he is almost an octogenarian, his etchings and

sketches and pictures betray a youthful vigour, an individuality of method and of vision that rightly gives them a high place. It is military life in all its phases, and especially, so to speak, its undress phases, the country rides, the shoeing and branding of horses, the arrival of the mail in camp, and such like incidents to which he gives a pulsating vitality.

Nevertheless, Fattori and Ussi still represent the objective schools. Individuality, however, was making itself more and more felt. Therefore, omitting mention of certain older searchers who have passed away, I will rather turn to the younger men who have more or less been touched by the Macchiaioli influence. It is easy to see that from them they learnt to love truth, nature and progress. On the other hand, they never deny their Tuscan origin.

It is really strange how these regional distinctions survive. Modern Tuscan art is pervaded with a serene and reposeful spirit. The Tuscans love the sunshine as all must love it who live in this "land of lands," but they love and paint it as they see it in this favoured province, not with the intense ardour wherewith Phœbus Apollo inundates the South, bringing all colours to glow and glitter. The sun-god kissing the fairy-like hills and dales of Tuscany suffuses all nature with a soft golden haze. And the blood of the Tuscan flows less hotly than that of his southern brother. Little interests, little pleasures, little sensations appeal more to his quieter temperament than stormy passions. What he likes to represent is the simple, the purely human. Rarely does he rise to heroic or romantic heights. Nor has the affected or forced any attraction for his eminently sane and equitable mind. And this holds good of the past as of the present.

Character of Tuscan Art.

Eminently an offspring of his province is Francesco Gioli, whose landscape and figure themes are delicate, graceful, suave, elegant, correct and unmannered. The same remarks apply to Arturo Faldi, to Raffaello Sorbi, Adolfo and Angiolo Tommasi, Niccolò Cannicci, Egisto Ferroni, and many more

whom it would be tedious to enumerate. Not a great art but an art good to live with, pictures that it is pleasant to have hanging upon the walls of our habitations, an art that enfolds us in a just and healthy atmosphere.

The men I have named belong, however, rather to the older generation. In the works of the younger men it is pleasant to observe that their landscapes are no longer treated as faithful productions of what is seen, but that they have become illuminated with soul. Italy is at last following in the wake of that trend in modern landscape whose character Oscar Wilde so masterfully summed up in his "De Profundis" when he says: "In its subtlety and sensitiveness of impression, its suggestion of a spirit dwelling in external things and making its raiment of earth and air, of mist and city alike, and in the morbid sympathy of its moods, tones and colours, modern landscape art is realising for us pictorially what was realised in such plastic perfection by the Greeks." These new landscapes are no longer trite in theme and treatment like those we are accustomed to see in the art dealers' windows and which tempt the Philistine buyer. And what is further noticeable is that in most of these modern canvases Man is distinguished by his absence. Nature here exists *per se* and not for or through Man. It is in this respect that the modern note is most truly sounded. These landscapes might be said to be dematerialized.

Landscape Painting.

A strong and very individual artist is Giorgio Kienerk, a true Italian, despite his German surname—figure-painter, poster-painter, sculptor and book illustrator, all in one, who has recently removed to Paris, where he is making for himself a fair fame. One of his most original traits are his water-colour "smears" where, without apparent outlines, he makes suggestive portraits of wonderful vitality and resemblance, despite the fact that they are laid on in one tint only, giving the whole effect of a rich painting.

Giorgio Kienerk.

In decorative art the Tuscans have lately made a forward start. Especial mention must be made of De Karolis, the illustrator of D'Annunzio's plays, an artist who in a sense stands in a classical atmosphere outside of modern life and transports us into surroundings "that never were on land or sea." Yet another decorative artist of quaint imaginative *bravura* is Galileo Chini, who has also made a name for himself as the designer of most of the best works turned out by the Arte della Ceramica, a society which took the gold medal at Paris and St. Louis.

Decorative Artists.

In portraiture, never a specially Tuscan art, the moderns too are not strong, despite the fashionable portrait-painters Corcos and Galli, and the younger men, Costetti, who is a little violent in method, and Ghiglia, who has good perception. As a rule modern Italian portrait-painting is too smooth, the artist seeks to flatter his sitter and fails to render his individuality. This may arise from lack of psychological intuition, or of patience to study their subject, or more likely from that innate amiability of the Italian character which never likes to say or do anything that may not prove agreeable.

Portrait Painters.

An interesting figure, an artist born out of his time, is Riccardo Meacci, a Quattrocentista, who paints little altar-pieces and triptychs quite in the manner of his great forebears. It was the English who discovered this artist, whom many Italians do not even know by name to this day. Queen Victoria honoured him with her especial patronage, and he executed various works for her, often from the Queen's own suggestions, such as the picture painted in memory of Prince Henry of Battenberg's untimely death. Meacci is an ascetic of the brush, a graceful symbolist who understands how to give in his tiny pictures all the solemnity and importance of larger canvases.

Riccardo Meacci.

I must still say a word for the most promising of all the

Photo by *P. H. Fincham, West Dulwich*

THE GRAND CANAL, VENICE

Tuscans, Plinio Nomellini, who lives on the Pisan Riviera, far from the haunts of men. His career has not been easy. "Hunger and Art were"—according to his own words—"two phantoms that ever danced before my eyes, and since the two seemed inseparable, I decided to put up with both." His pictures are very hymns to light, and though they have a symbolic character, this symbolism is not abstract or archaic. He has formed the just equilibrium between decorative art and a poetic observation of reality. Remarkable among his works are "Colloquy of the Trees," "Youth Triumphant," and "The Migration of Mankind." In this latter picture we see a vast horizon suffused with clouds and vapour. The figures of the hurrying men and women are only just indicated in their essentials, in the sombre colours of their garments, their banners, and seem almost lost in infinity. This obscure mass, moving as by invisible impulse, towards unknown goals and destinies, wearying themselves under the inexorable sky, gives to the work an epic force.

A Promising Tuscan Artist.

As in the past so in the present the Venetian painters excel in the use of colour, luscious, rich, superb and dazzling, like the sunlight glinting on the water of their placid lagoons. Indeed, in the past, it was the Venetians who closed the historic sequence of the grandeur of Italian art with Tiepolo, that splendid colourist, who revived the fulgid fantasies of Paolo Veronese. And as in the past so in the present it is the exterior aspect of things rather than their deeper inner meaning that attracts these light-hearted dwellers on the waters. Like the Neapolitans, they have picturesque and suggestive objects ever before their eyes, and this, perchance, distracts them from making those profounder studies which are rendered imperative to those who dwell in less lovely surroundings.

The Venetian School.

Still for a time after Tiepolo even the Venetians became engulfed in the false and mannered methods of the so-called romantic epoch. It was Giacomo Favretto who rescued them

thence and revealed in his canvases the Venice of to-day, banishing from his art all that was false and artificial, all pose and over-finish, using simple and pure colours and painting boldly and naturally.

His example was quickly followed, for he had found the right note demanded by the changed conditions, and now there exists at Venice a whole group of artists who demonstrate by their works their intuition of the aspirations and needs of modern art.

In this family, that counts several masters amid its ranks, a high place pertains to Ettore Tito. His first work to make a name for him was entitled "Pescheria," that fish market of Venice that so gleams and glitters with colour. He followed it by other works of varied character—now an Alpine landscape, now a portrait, now a figure subject, for Tito above all loves variety; he will not be bound within limits, and does not follow up a success in one line with a picture of the same nature. Michael Angelo was wont to say "One paints with the brain and with the hands." Tito does both. At the same time he neither poses as a philosopher or as a psychologist. He only wants to represent the truth as he sees it. This has not hindered him, however, from also wandering in the paths of symbolism with a decorative work entitled "Fortuna." Still, in his best years Tito, who is Professor of Drawing at the Venetian Academy, has doubtless still much to give to the world.

Ettore Tito.

Casare Laurenti has been influenced by the modern symbolists, hence he loves to depict on his canvases the antitheses so constantly offered to us by existence. There are, however, no new thoughts in his "Parabola della Vita" which though it is painted with a certain *brio* and also with pathos is perchance too self-conscious and of too set purpose. This reproach does not fall on his "Fioritura Nuova," an allegorical, decorative canvas celebrating the beauties of an Italian spring. Beyond

Casare Laurenti.

question, Laurenti is a painter of talent and his works can never be overlooked.

This same remark applies to Pietro Fragiacomo, the seascapist, the poetic painter of silence, who even more than the two Ciardi, father and son, now so noted for their Venetian scenes, renders the melancholy tranquillity of the Ocean City. Worthy to stand beside him is also Bartolommeo Bazzi, always solemn, often mystic in his pallid moonlight effects or in the serene quietism of his lagoons. Indeed, in naming the contemporary Venetian land and seascapists it is almost invidious to know whom to mention and whom to omit. Many are interesting, not a few are excellent.

Land and Sea-scapists.

A subject-painter is Luigi Nono, whose "Refugium Peccatorum" is, perhaps, one of the best things in this line painted during recent years. The scene is laid before that picturesque figure of the Virgin that stands upon the bridge of Chioggia. A broken-hearted woman kneels before it, pouring out her sorrows and her sins to the Mother of Mercy. This work has been acquired for the nation and now hangs in Rome. Nono's individuality and his power of reading the popular soul, are shown in all his pictures, which though they naturally vary somewhat in excellence, are all more or less on the same lines.

Luigi Nono.

A very strange painter is the man who hides his identity under the pseudonym of Marius Pictor. It is not unusual for a writer to use a *nom de plume*, but it is almost unique for a painter. This artist has taken as his domain the night; his moonlight and starlight effects are strangely weird and suggestive, a pagan atmosphere appears to pervade all his conceptions. It is manifest that his individuality must be marked.

"Marius Pictor."

Nor is it only in Italy itself that Italian artists have distinguished themselves. Many are established in Paris, where they are held in high esteem. Who does not remember the elegant scenes of high life painted by De Nittis, so early

removed from art and life, the powerful portraits of Boldini, perhaps the finest of modern Italian portrait painters; the genre pictures of Lionello Balestrieri, whose "Beethoven" was the success of a Parisian Salon; and Alberto Pisa, who depicts in water-colour the characteristic scenes of London life, to name but a very few?

Italians in Paris.

Such is a succinct and but too superficial survey of contemporary Italian art, in which I have sought to give rather an idea of the general trend than to enumerate its representatives in detail. How inadequate is my attempt I feel yet the more as I turn the pages of De Gubernatis' "Dictionary of Living Italian Painters," in which over two thousand names are registered. But I hope I have at least made good my opening proposition and have shown that there does exist a real, living, active and noteworthy modern Italian art. Also it will be seen that in the artists with whom I have dealt there is absent that commercial element which of recent times has made modern Italian art a byeword and rendered difficult the way of earnest and gifted artists. If we desire to sum up its salient features I should be inclined to say that its most notable feature consists in that rise of landscape art, which was least strongly represented in Italy's glorious past. This is the more to be esteemed since there seems something in the Italian landscape, with its wonderful brilliancy of colour, which renders it difficult to represent adequately, and tempts artists into a certain garishness. Hence some of the latest Italian painters, inspired by their Northern brethren, have chosen for their effects grey or rainy days when the bright lights and deep shadows give place to more equal tints.

Salient Features of Italian Art.

In portrait-painting the Italians are trying to revive their past fame. Thus, Gelli was specially summoned to Vienna to paint the Emperor of Austria, Corcos to Berlin to limn the German Kaiser. The last-named artist's splendid portrait of the poet Carducci is a real masterpiece, both as regards

likeness, technique and intuition of character. As a rule, however, the portraits of women are less good than those of men. The Venetian, Lino Selvatico, furnishes almost the only exception to this rule. Neither impressionism nor symbolism have made much headway, nor are they as a rule successful. Neither tendency suits the clear-cut Italian intelligence. In genre painting they are strong, while historical painting and classical subjects, especially the latter, are in scant demand, as out of harmony with the trend of the day, although the Academies with their usual backwardness continue to propound classic themes for examination subjects, alternating them (such is their idea of conforming to modern requirements!) with "Quarrels in Wine Shops" and "Exteriors of Cobblers' Stalls." For lack of other subjects adapted to pictorial treatment, a group of painters have taken to representing religious themes, but this not from any intention of treating them religiously, but simply because they are stories which are known to everybody and the supernatural element in them gives scope for artistic treatment.

A branch in which Italians excel is in all that pertains to art restoration. Here their native good taste evinces itself as well as their rare manual skill. In the miniaturist's craft, too, they have not lost their cunning. Contemporary Italians will copy or invent illuminated books and addresses with the same delicacy of touch and wealth of colour that is seen in the choral books of old.

Painters and Sculptors of Counterfeits.

There is another department, too, in which they carry off the palm and that is in painting pictures that are made to pass off as works of the Old Masters. Some of these are so splendidly executed, so exactly reproduce the spirit and character of the time and the artist whose title they assume, that even experts are continually deceived. There hang in all European and American galleries and above all in the latter, works from the hands of these painters, truly masters in their line. Some even exist in Italian collections. To

name these men would not be fair. Indeed, they mostly work anonymously, but some few quite openly carry on this trade and throw the responsibility of deception upon the purchaser. It is, moreover, as a rule not the artist but the purchaser who labels these wares, and generally this purchaser is not a private person but a dealer who passes off these fraudulent productions as the genuine product. And it is not they who should be blamed for their existence but the public, who demand the impossible, who, following a mere fashion, prefer the old, simply because it is old, to the new, who will not believe that the men of to-day can also turn out work worth acquiring. The exercise of a little common-sense would hinder the public from falling into these traps, from walking into the parlour of this spider. Is it not obvious that the supply of masterpieces from the hands of the great artists must have been exhausted long ago, that it is the exception rather than the rule to find an unknown picture from a well-known hand, that, seeing the vicissitudes to which works of art are subjected by fire, wanton destruction, normal wear and tear of time, the wonder is rather that so much remains for us to admire and enjoy. If only these painters and sculptors of Frauds might be allowed to develop their often most striking talents in a natural direction, Italy would have great artists the more to show, and many even who would do no discredit to her glorious past.

I will name but one—the sculptor Bastianini, whose marvellously skilful sculpture pervaded and interpenetrated with the spirit of the fourteenth century, deceived the greatest connoisseurs. Busts from his hand were exhibited till quite recently both at the Louvre, at South Kensington, at Berlin and elsewhere under high-sounding names, Mino da Fiesole, Rossellini, Desiderio and so forth, and might still so figure had not Bastianini himself told on those who employed him to make these counterfeits.

And thus, by a natural transition, I have touched on the theme of sculpture.

CHAPTER V

SCULPTURE AND ARCHITECTURE

MODERN Italian sculpture embraces a wide field, and here, if possible, even more than in the domain of painting, the aptitude of our contemporaries is denied. And in this case the tourist really has great excuse, for if he judges, as very naturally he is led to judge, of modern Italian sculpture from the specimens he beholds in public places, churches, squares, shop-windows, cemeteries, he is right in dismissing it as deplorable. And deplorable it is, for the further reason that, with such rare exceptions as almost to vanish into nothingness, it is the worst and not the best sculptors to whom are entrusted the public monuments, those endless series of Garibaldi's, Victor Emmanuel's, Cavour's and Humbert's that disfigure every town and village of the Peninsula. The reason is not far to seek. Favouritism, so-called competitions, in which the wires are pulled, explains the abstention or exclusion of the better men.

Sculpture in Public Places.

Nevertheless these better men exist, and in sculpture as in painting the Italy of to-day can show no mean record. It is true that a sad amount of rubbish is turned out, which figures above all in the shop windows of cities haunted by the foreigner, trivial works of trite imagination and invention, too often, unfortunately, executed with rare skill of hand and excellent finish of workmanship. But for the existence of this rubbish the stranger is responsible. He admires it, he buys it, and where there is demand there will always be supply.

It will be objected that the Italians must also admire these wares, for works of this class abound in their cemeteries, and this is true. Yet amid much that is miserable these

cemeteries have also good works to show. An evidence of this is seen in the sepulchral monuments of Leonardo Bistolfi, that most poetic and spiritual sculptor, who seems to have made funeral memorials his own.

Leonardo Bistolfi.

Bistolfi is one of the group of sculptors who, inspired by the aims of Marochetti, Bartolini and Vela, broke with the traditions of classicism and endeavoured to bring the "white art" into contact with our age. It was their aim to return to nature instead of to tradition for schooling and suggestion. The men who formed this group were mostly Piedmontese, and of these Bistolfi is perchance the most gifted, certainly the most original, and above all the one who, having a marked personal character, has known how to give his personal impress to his art. Each of Bistolfi's productions is inspired with a marked feeling for beauty; a class of beauty that, perchance, has little in common with the beauty of the idealists, but on this account is no less transformed with an exquisitely idealistic outlook on life, which he interprets with characteristically expressive accents, whatever be the subject which arouses it, the thought or the sentiment that he seeks to infuse into his clay.

Bistolfi is a poet-sculptor. Studying his works in their entirety, works that are eminently penetrated with the breath of our age, it is not easy to deduce from them whether there preponderates in their creator the realist or the ideologue, the sculptor or the thinker. When an artist puts forth works so essentially diverse in their manifestations as Bistolfi has done, all these questions of school and classification become secondary. Bistolfi, like all true artist natures, has an exquisite, even if unconscious, comprehension of his environment, social as well as aesthetic, and on this account he is modern in his ideals as well as in his emotions. His works reflect our contemporary methods of thought and feeling, as they manifest themselves when refined and glorified by aesthetic perceptions. Each of them, so different in their

several themes and sources of inspiration, is the fruit of his rare intelligence and knowledge, his sensibility and faculty of meditation.

Born at Casale Monferrato, in 1859, Bistolfi was descended from a family of artists. Hence as a baby he already modelled and carved. His first work was an Angel of Death made for the Campo Santo of Turin. This angel at once made manifest the personal nature of his genius. His was not the conventional angel we are accustomed to see on graves, but had personality, life, individuality; this angel had pondered over the mystery of existence, and had envisaged the Eternal.

The Turin Exhibition of 1880 brought Bistolfi into contact with the most modern expressions of plastic art, and generated in him a desire to be, so to speak, up to date, to dedicate his work to illustrate the spirit of his day. In Italy washing is done out of doors, and usually in groups, often picturesque to the eye, though few painters, and no sculptor, has ever felt attracted to draw the theme because of its seemingly innate vulgarity. Bistolfi was not repelled by this; it was precisely such a group of washerwomen he chose to model, and he modelled them with force, a realism, a knowledge of the psychic character and physique of his prototypes, that caused the little group to appear a page of Zola written in clay. When completed he sent in his work for acceptance to the *Promotrice*, where it was rejected with dismay as indecent and vulgar. The artistic jury, composed as usual of a set of old fogies rooted in ancient ideas, had utterly failed to grasp the aim striven after by the young artist. This refusal to exhibit his work was to prove the corner-stone of Bistolfi's success and rapid rise into fame. Denied the chance of showing his work in the company of his peers, Bistolfi induced the art dealer, Janetti, to expose the group in his shop window, and there, under the Portici del Po, for days together the pavement was densely packed with a curious crowd anxious to see the

The Turin Exhibition.

work the jury had so indignantly rejected. On the Piazza, at cafés and clubs, this audacious piece of work was eagerly discussed. It was the topic of the day, and Bistolfi's name was in every mouth. Some judged the work a horror and agreed with the jury, others lauded it to the skies, but whether praising or blaming the original conception, all agreed as to the exquisite truth and beauty of the handling. And time, as usual, wrought its revenge. In 1884 the same work, cast in bronze, appeared at the Exhibition and was honestly and impartially criticised and judged.

Groups from Nature.

But in this early fervour of seeking after a personal path the expressions were not all of so naturalistic a character, were not all inspired by a youthful passion and effervescence. Bistolfi's is too truly a poet's temperament not to have felt the charm of simple nature; the country, its sights and sounds, and scents, had also their message to give to his art. Three delicately conceived simple, poetic groups, "Il Tramonto," "Pei Campi," and "Piove," were the fruit of this mental mood; figures, inspirations, taken from the real life of the fields, such as Millet painted, not the unreal and theatrical Arcady of the poets.

The Sculptor of Philosophy.

With a mental endowment such as Bistolfi's, a thinker, a reader, a reasoner, it is obvious that he could not always remain in one road, or produce works uniform in their sources of inspiration. Such a nature must of necessity traverse many intellectual and psychic moods before it will have found inner harmony or have reached "the years that bring the philosophic mind;" and these would necessarily be reflected in its creations, as is the case with all artists, no matter in what field of activity. Bistolfi pondered—as who has not pondered?—on man's existence, on life and death, its meaning, its origin, its purpose, and these meditations were to result in a work of art, which, to my mind, is by far the most remarkable Bistolfi has produced, and which, indeed, was the first that attracted my

attention to his genius. It was planned to adorn the sepulchral monument of the Pansa family at Cuneo, and Bistolfi, after the manner of the Greeks, gave it a name, "The Sphinx." It is this work that has gained for Bistolfi the reputation of being the sculptor of philosophy, the symbolist of metaphysics, the work which marked his entrance into the ranks of the symbolist artists, a group that has found but few recruits in Italy, where the quick, sure eye rather than the eye trained through the mind is usually the motive factor in all modern work. Every work of Bistolfi's, on the other hand, even his earliest, incorporates an inner and not merely an optic vision. And, unlike most artists, his ideas are not used as a means to help his art, but his art is their end. In Bistolfi the philosopher thinks, creates, whilst the artist expresses. All these qualities are focussed in "The Sphinx," a poem in marble, a proud interrogation flung into the high heavens by suffering man, defiantly demanding a solution of this "mystery of nights and days."

"The Sphinx."

Dining together one day with this artist, who is as charming, refined, and original in his conversation as in his art, at the hospitable table of the great scientist, Lombroso, the conversation turned on Bistolfi's increasing tendency towards symbolism, and Lombroso told him, half in fun and half in earnest, that if he would persist in putting such strong food before the public, he ought to accompany it with explanations calculated to help the weaker vessels. The result of this passing remark was a long letter he wrote to me about his art and ideas, which enables me to give the sculptor's interpretation of "The Sphinx" in his own words :—

"Forgive me, I ought to have written to you ere this, and at the same time I sent you the photographs, but I have ever a strange and profound shrinking from re-evoking from the depths of my soul, whence came and come dreams often unquiet and tormenting, which I strive to translate into our grey and cold

The Sculptor's Interpretation.

material. And yet I quite understand that the artist himself should always comment on his works, especially when these have a tendency and significance which the crowd is not yet accustomed to decipher. Another reason for the reluctance which I feel in speaking of my works is the weariness they leave behind me, while it would be needful to come with fresh and living force to the task of translating justly and accurately the finished work of art into another medium and another material. But you will forgive the delay, the paternal scruples. . . . The original idea was to represent by a symbolical figure " La Morte "—Death—as we moderns regard it, who, if we do not weep with cruel fears of the hell-fire of the Padre Eterno, are yet disturbed and disquieted by the unimaginable thought of the infinite unknown. In expressing this idea almost unconsciously, certainly without premeditation, the figure of Death took the aspect of a Sphinx. Thus others began even then to call her, and thus I now call her myself. The monument is (or at least wishes to be) a sincere aspiration towards the immaculate purity, the calm, the harmony of the universe. It is true, in the statue, the hands, slightly contracted, still recall the sorrow of human desire. The head, instead, which is already wrapped in the azure, has no longer any expression of individual will. The eyes are void and profound like our nights, and the flowers, the flowers of death, living and contorted around the base in the guise of poppies and chrysanthemums, climb up gradually until they rise in the shape of lilies, till they grow transformed into those last rigid, lifeless, almost star-like flowers which touch the shoulders of the figure. The most grave, most insistent and most foolish objection made to this monument is that the figure lacks form, that the head is small compared to the rest, that the body is lost under the folds of the drapery. Now, if there is anything really good and successful in this work, it is that I have had the courage to create a form adapted to the conception. Good heavens!

it is so easy to make arms and long or short legs according to the sacred canons of sculpture!"

It was natural that this work aroused ardent discussion. Here was no longer the conventional tombstone preaching the conventional views. It haunts the memory like a strophe of Omar Khayyam, whose doctrines it recalls. The Sphinx inaugurates a new departure in tombstone art, which, rightly understood, should be either simply decorative or render symbolically the deeds, thoughts or life of those it commemorates. No wonder that after the Sphinx Bistolfi received many commissions to execute grave-stones. His own favourite is that erected to the memory of Sebastiano Grandis, the engineer who, together with Grattoni and Sommeiller, projected and carried out the tunnelling of the Mont Cenis, the first of the sub-Alpine passages.

The Sphinx—A New Departure.

The body of Grandis is represented as lying in a crypt, quarried out of the material he subjugated by his genius. His work is indicated by a very low bas-relief, bas-reliefs of the kind Donatello loved and which Bistolfi has revived in Italian sculptured art, carved in one corner of the granite wall in which he reposes. It represents a group of workmen intent on carrying out the perforation of the famous tunnel. "The Beauty of Death" is Bistolfi's own name for this monument. One of his latest works is that designed for Segantini's tomb. "Truth" is his own name for this, that depicts a naked maiden issuing forth from a mountain's grip. Her head is still held in the torpid slumber of matter, but the torso is freed and shines forth radiant in the sun and daylight. Hereby he wishes to symbolise the soul of the mountain as Segantini evoked it and beheld it in his painted dreams.

Tombstone Sculpture.

Bistolfi is sometimes reproached for his manner, which is frankly impressionist, but he handles this with such sobriety and aristocratic distinction that what becomes careless in his imitators is a merit in his own case.

It is certainly curious that the revival of sculpture should have occurred in Piedmont, a province that was never artistically eminent, amid that stern, strong and strenuous people living at the foot of the rugged Alps to which Italy also owes her political resurrection. But a city that like Turin has given birth to three such remarkable sculptors as Bistolfi, Canonica and Calandra, may indeed be proud of its sons.

The Career of Calandra.

Calandra especially burst upon the world like to a dazzling meteor when he first exhibited his equestrian group of the Duke of Aosta, sometime King of Spain, at which he had worked silently, unostentatiously, uninterruptedly for ten years. Curiously enough this man, who was born in 1856, began life as a society butterfly, who, though he studied sculpture did so only for amusement, turning out portraits of fine ladies and other like trivialities. Suddenly he awoke to the banality of this existence and exiled himself into the Alps to study Nature and abandon himself to her influence. The results of this sojourn were a series of little statuettes of which "The Poacher" and "The Ploughman," now in the Roman Gallery of Modern Art, are perhaps the choicest in their rude masculine sincerity, epitomising a passing moment in the suggestive manner that Rodin has introduced into modern sculpture.

A Projected Statue to Garibaldi.

Such smaller works were gradually preparing Calandra's hand for more important labours. As he chiselled at these his busy mind was maturing his individual conception as to statuary monuments, with a result that has given him the first place as the leader in a much-needed revolt against conventional official memorials. A competition, opened for a record to Garibaldi in Milan in 1885, gave Calandra his first chance to put his views into concrete form. It was objected that his sketch, though it contained the prize, was rather a modelled picture than a piece of sculpture, a criticism which gratified its author, since it proved that the public

had grasped that which he had desired to express, namely, that Garibaldi was essentially a picturesque subject and that rigid plasticity could not exactly render the full significance nor all the aspects of the Risorgimento epic. However, the projected statue was never erected. The commission was given instead to one of the numerous official stone-cutters who are allowed to deface the streets of Italy with their jejune productions. In this project Calandra had given shape to his conviction that a monument, especially an heroic monument, should not be composed, as is usually the case, of two distinct unities, the pedestal and the statue, accidentally united by a mere material contact, but should be a vital and significant part each of the other, instinctively fused together intellectually and actually.

Monument to the Duke of Aosta.

It was this innovation that Calandra develops in his monument to the late Duke of Aosta that at one bound brought him into view as the strongest sculptor now possessed by Italy. The work is literally, not merely nominally, an apotheosis of Amedeo of Savoy, and through him of the whole dynasty of gallant, dashing warriors that have made that house a bye-word for courage and loyalty. It is not merely a plastic epic, but a plastic historical synthesis. At the same time, and here must be sought the feature that distinguishes it from the work of past centuries of a like character, it is entirely modern in its scientific conception of the relation in which, according to the latest theories, the individual stands to the mass. In older bas-reliefs a crowd is merely a mass that has but one voice and is swayed by the same impulses. Instead, in Calandra's conception each figure on the storied base stands out from its fellow. They are so many different human beings raising so many isolated voices that swell the general chorus.

The bronze equestrian statue itself rests upon a massive pedestal of rough-hewn granite. Prince Amedeo, represented as a young and dashing cavalier, is mounted upon a magnificent steed. With rhythmic gesture the noble animal rears

itself in a fine arch as it gallops through the air. Around the central pedestal there rushes a cavaleresque vision of the House of Savoy, concentrating themselves into groups in the four corners, of which each separate group condenses an historic epoch, from the founder of the family to Amedeo II in the act of distributing to his impoverished peasants, in lieu of the money which he, too, did not possess, broken bits of his Commander of the Annunziata golden chain, and, finally, his horses' hoofs firmly planted upon a Roman *cippus*, to Vittorio Emanuele, first King of United Italy, who is so placed that he looks straight across the nine centuries to his great forebear, Umberto Biancamano.

This monument, standing amid the green shades of the Valentino Park, backed by the fresh green villa-dotted slopes that rise from the banks of the Po, tier upon tier, until they lose themselves among the snow-capped Alps, is as fortunate in its site as in its maker. Modern Italy may confidently hope that Calandra will enrich his land with other equally fine monuments that may cause us to forget and, if possible, forgive, the previous official abominations.

Pietro Canonica.

Pietro Canonica's distinguishing feature is a remarkable sculptorial versatility and a capacity for suffusing the hardness of marble with a softness of sentiment. Born at Turin in 1869, he was already as a boy attracted to the plastic art, but not till 1891 did he turn out a work that met with success. This was his "Contrasts"—a bitterly-weeping little ballet girl whose hot tears are spoiling the starched stiffness of her skirts. His next success was made in Paris, after waiting in vain for recognition at home. It was called "After Taking the Vows," and represented a young novice clad in the habit that should separate her from the world for ever. The contrast between these rigid garments and the fresh childish face, to whom life was as yet a closed book, constituted the secret of its attraction. Indeed, Canonica possesses a special gift for the delineation of young faces. His children have a charm that

recalls those of the Della Robbia and of Donatello, with the addition of a more modern touch in the matter of expression and sentiment. He is also very happy in his portrait busts, especially of men and of elderly women. His half-length of the Duchess of Genoa (Queen Margherita's mother) can worthily stand beside the best work of a like kind dating from the Renaissance. Religious themes also attract him, and he has modelled a Crucifix that, despite the trite nature of the theme, is original in the best sense of the word. Of late, too, he has tried his hand at sepulchral monuments, with happy results.

A Ligurian Sculptor.

Liguria can show some conventional sculptors, but none that rise above the average, excepting always Giulio Monteverde, a Genoese by birth though by residence a Roman. As he is nearly seventy he belongs, of course, to the older school, nevertheless some of his work is impressionist and modern in feeling, especially his most famous group, familiar in reproductions of all kinds, called "The Genius of Franklin," in which the happy intuition that first applied electricity to the needs of common life is lauded in most felicitous and genial fashion, and also his "Jenner," in which honour is done to the discoverer of vaccination, an apparently inartistic theme handled with artistic and philanthropic intuition.

The Sculpture of Lombardy.

Lombardy, unlike Piedmont, is not at this moment sculptorially prominent, perhaps because its hard-working population is more absorbed in industrial than in artistic pursuits. Among the Lombard sculptors a high place must be assigned to Quadrelli, with his symbolic and dainty figurines. Grace rather than strength is his keynote.

A Lombard, too, by birth and residence, though a Russian by origin, is Paul Troubetzky, who has gathered laurels for his works even in critical Paris. He is above all else an observer of animal life which he renders with profound perception, not humanising his wild or tame beasts after the

fashion of Landseer, but preserving their specific racial note. He is, further, a profound student of human physiognomy, rendering it in all its various shades and moods. And his methods of treatment are as individual as his themes. Casting overboard all traditional plastic formulas he has formed a formula of his own which combines impressionism with static force, a *bizarre* union that renders his output strangely attractive. He has of late been occupied in working at St. Petersburg on a commission from the Czar.

The Work of Guiseppe Grandi.

A word must be given to Guiseppe Grandi, though he has passed from among the living, for he, too, had freed himself from academic conventionalism. To him are due those two fine works the tourist beholds in the streets of Milan, the statue erected to the famous criminal reformer Beccaria, a man far ahead of his age, of whom Italy is justly proud, and the monument that commemorates the heroism of the Milanese in the so-called "Five Days" when they attacked and drove out the hated Austrian invader. What distinguishes his work, beside its inherent excellence, is the, nowadays rare, circumstance that he worked himself upon the marble without the aid of pointers or chisellers, and also that he himself cast his bronzes, a circumstance to which is attributed his too early death, as it is feared he caught a chill during this difficult operation.

A Venetian Artist.

Whoever has visited the crowded alley-ways of Venice that cluster round the Central Post Office, cannot fail to remember the statue to Goldoni that stands in a tiny open space and which is so happy, so comic in its conception and execution, so truly the portrait of that gay seventeenth-century dramatist and psychologist, that as we look at it we cannot help smiling with the merry Venetian at life's quips and cranks. This work is due to the chisel of Antonio del Zolto. He has not done much since of equal value, though a statue that represents the great violinist, Tartini, in the act of sounding one of

those stupendous passages that made him the wizard of his instrument, was boldly conceived though not quite as happily executed. The moment selected was, perhaps, too fugitive to be enshrined in immemorable marble. This work now stands at Pirano in Istria, the musician's birthplace.

Besides these artists Venice has contributed little to modern sculpture, and, indeed, in the days of her glory she was ever stronger in painting than in the plastic arts.

Modern Roman Sculptors.

Rome has attracted within her walls many men not Romans by birth, among them the Sicilian Ettore Ximenes, a bold spirit, who besides having paid his obligatory tribute to the national hero, Garibaldi, in the shape of a monument at Milan, is known throughout Italy by a really charming group called "Schoolfellows," inspired by Edmund de Amicis' book, "Cuore." In Rome, too, lives Filippo Cifariello, whose exquisitely fine and accurate modelling aroused fierce doubts and discussions on the exhibition of his male nude, "A Fakir," a number of critics asserting that it had been modelled over the living body, as such truth could not otherwise be achieved. Cifariello defended himself variantly from this charge and has since turned out many other masterpieces of close observation and secure technique. It is to be feared he will not be able to defend himself so successfully from the imputation he now lies under of having murdered his wife in an access of Southern passion and jealousy, and that a fine artist will thus be lost to Italy.

Ernesto Biondi.

Ernesto Biondi has also been the subject of popular discussion of late in connection with his statue group contracted for by the Central Park Museum, which the American authorities refused to exhibit on the score of immorality, after having engaged to do so; on which account, after the matter had dragged on for months, the sculptor brought a suit of damages against the authorities. This much-discussed group entitled "Saturnalia," reproduced in bronze, now stands in the

Gallery of Modern Art in Rome. Objections may be raised to it on the score of technique, but its cleverness is indisputable. The subject may not appeal to all as a matter of taste, but to accuse it of immorality is to judge it from a narrow provincial standpoint. Biondi's purpose was rather to convey a lesson; his group resembles that of the Dances of Death. The central idea inculcates that in the midst of revelry the great summons may come. A fine work of Biondi's has wandered to the Republic of Chile. It perpetuates the civic virtues of the two Chilians to whom, after liberating it from the Spanish yoke, the new era of peace and prosperity in that distant land is due. A European competition was invited and won by Biondi. The two statesmen are raised on high upon a quadrangular base of bronze, one sitting, and one standing. There is no inscription upon the monument. The life work and merits of the two legislators is expressed allegorically around a magnificent base rich in symbolic figures. Of these one of the finest is the Law, a noble matron enveloped in an ample mantle holding in her hand the Civil Code that was substituted for the ferocious Spanish legislation. Felicitous, too, is the figure that adumbrates Primary Education, rendered in the person of a mother who by the mere words that spring from her heart gives the first elements of instruction to her children.

Monument to Chilian Statesmen.

It is doubly deplorable that the modern monuments of Italy should be so trivial, seeing that there are Italians still living who can erect worthier memorials than those upraised by official decree.

It is too early to judge of the national monument that is being placed in Rome to Victor Emmanuel. Lack of funds, the death of the original designer, squabbles among the workers, have delayed its completion, though in the meantime its erection has unfortunately necessitated the demolition of some picturesque and venerable landmarks, and it seems

National Monument to Victor Emmanuel.

more than doubtful if what is about to replace them will prove a sufficiently artistic compensation.

Speaking generally, the work of the modern Romans has much mental affinity with that of their forebears in a love of the florid, the extravagant, the ample, in an absence of sobriety, in a capacity for brilliance rather than for depth. I would not, however, that this sweeping judgment be accepted as lacking in exceptions, among which spring to my memory the graceful little terra-cottas of Constantino Barbella, true to life, and sober and large in conception, if small in execution.

The Sculpture of Naples.

As in painting, so in sculpture, modern Naples throbs with vitality. It would seem as though the sun-god, that ardent lover of the sea-washed town, had endowed its inhabitants with a special power of plastic expression. For in all matters pertaining to handicraft the Neapolitans possess an almost fatal facility, often tempting them to sacrifice real study to momentary effect. This has notably been the case with recent Neapolitan sculptors who, in their desire to attain to something new, in their perfectly legitimate aim to emancipate themselves from rigid and fossilized tradition, have somewhat forgotten the exigencies of their material and the limitations imposed upon them by stone. The result has been a form of sculpture that degenerates into impossible vagaries, that treads too closely in the footprints of painting and tries to ignore the barriers that separate the different artistic faculties.

A Typical Sculptor.

An artist who has found the happy mean between spent and frigid classicism and modern naturalism is Francesco Jerace, who is in the last sense of the word a typical modern Italian sculptor. Born amid the wild mountains of Calabria he studied at the Naples Academy, where he carried off every prize. His first success was made with a genre sculpture entitled "Guappetiello," that untranslatable Neapolitan name for a boaster, for one who talks big, who gives himself airs of great courage, and who is at bottom a coward. Guappo is the

term for the full-grown specimen of this class; Guappetiello his juvenile imitator. Jerace's "Guappetiello" is a life-sized Neapolitan street-boy who, cigar stump in mouth, thumbs thrust in the arm-holes of his waistcoat, struts forth with defiant impertinence to challenge the world. Another of his genre and youthful successes was "Cupid conquered and Clipt." Jerace's Cupid is not victor but vanquished: he lies stretched upon the ground helpless, with arms and legs bound and wings shorn. The scissors that did the deed lie beside him. His quiver, too, is empty, and the boy weeps over his impotence. It is a graceful statue both in idea and execution.

The Best Work of Jerace.

Throughout all Jerace's sculpture runs the endeavour to demonstrate that the triumph of pure line may be coupled with the eloquence of expression. His strongest and perhaps best work is to be found in his ideal busts and in his monuments, sepulchral and commemorative. Of these ideal busts most noteworthy is that entitled "Victa," by which name Jerace intends to refer to conquered Poland. It is a bust rather over life-size of a woman of heroic features and semi-Oriental type who looks down upon us with the proud disdain of one who though wounded to the death will not declare herself to be vanquished. She is in the full flower of womanhood, no half-developed maiden, and if there is a fault it is that the forms are so maturely ripe that they just skirt the voluptuous. Thus, under the proud chin there are lines that speak of middle-age and break the purity of contour, but this is done purposely. Jerace wishes to combine classic chastity with modern truthfulness, and he certainly succeeded here, as also in his head of "Ariadne," which runs the "Victa" close in popular favour. Here, too, we have to do with a statue of expression, that is to say, a typically modern work; the ancients, of course, always sought to depict repose in their sculpture, and even that most bereaved among women, Niobe, presents to us in her marble form only a face of serene resignation.

A felicitous symbolism distinguishes Jerace's monuments, as, for example, in the elegant memorial Bergamo has raised to Donizetti, where behind the seated composer floats a woman of ideal beauty who, unperceived by him, sounds on the lyre the music that he hears within his soul. The same central idea is repeated in Jerace's monument to Cimarosa, only instead of a Melpomene, who was in keeping with the romantic melodiousness of Donizetti, he substituted an alert little Cupid as more representative of the class of harmony that streamed from the gay heart of the elder musician.

In all his monuments Jerace has tried to break with the convention that elevates the subject upon some high pedestal after the manner of a Simon Stylites. He strives to give a character of verisimilitude to pose and environment and depicts his Beethoven, for instance, as leaning against a rough-hewn rock and gazing with unseeing eyes far out into the infinite.

Of late Jerace has been busy making bas-relief decorations for the Cathedral of Naples and Reggio, and here again he demonstrates his versatile capacity. An indefatigable worker and still in the full vigour of his manhood, the art world may look for many more manifestations of his craft.

This remark, alas! does not apply to the most original if not the strongest of Naples' sculptors to whose plastic efforts and line drawings a whole room was recently dedicated at the Venice Exhibition. Vincenzo Gemito is lost to art from the clouding of his brain and now leads an existence of retirement and isolation between the four walls of his modest Neapolitan home.

Vincenzo Gemito.

A foundling adopted by a poor artizan family, Vincenzo Gemito received no regular education, and at an early age had to fend for himself, following many trades, among these one as studio boy to a sculptor. This awoke his love for plastic art, and he modelled a bas-relief, of which his master took to himself the credit. How he managed to get instruction

is a marvel, but it is a fact that at 16 he obtained a Roman scholarship. Soon after, he modelled a statue called the "Young Gambler," which was bought by King Humbert, and this piece of deserved good luck laid the foundation of his success. Its delicate workmanship, its sure knowledge of anatomy, attracted admiration and wonder.

In 1878 Gemito scored a great success in Paris with a statue called "A Little Fisherman." This, and the fact that he had become a *protegé* of Meissonier's, led him to settle in the French capital, where for a while this *bizarre*, self-made artist became the sculptor *à la mode*.

This Parisian sojourn marks the epoch of his greatest activity, in which portrait busts and imaginative statuettes were turned out by him with a rapidity that did not detract from their excellence.

In the end, however, home-sickness gained the upper hand, and he returned to his native Naples. Here he obtained an order to model a complete table service for the King, a commission that filled him with pride, as well as a nervous fear that he could not meet the requirements. It was while engaged on the preliminary work that Gemito first showed signs of brain sickness, and after a while it was needful to keep him for several years in an asylum. He has now left this abode, but he still lives a life of strict seclusion and refuses to see any one outside his family, or hear news of the outer world. His intellect is quite clear at times, but his desire to work in sculpture has left him. It is nineteen years since he touched clay. He still speaks at moments of executing some capolavoro, but for the present he only draws and sketches works full of power and grace.

Achille d'Orsi is also an independent artist, who has made a fair name for himself with his statues, "The Parasites" and "Thy Neighbour," both with a social-economic bias; Vincenzo Alfani loves to depict the joys of motherhood; Gargiuolo models graceful heads of women, girls and children. These and many others are all exponents of that personal and, so

Achille d'Orsi.

Photo by *Chas. Abéniacar, Naples*

SCULPTORS AT WORK

to speak, intimate note which is the hall-mark of contemporary Neapolitan art, reflecting the multi-coloured and yet uniform nature of its meridional population, and thereby rendering Neapolitan sculpture the most picturesque possessed by modern Italy.

A personal note but of a very different nature pervades the work of the Tuscans. Despite the atrocities that defile the shop-windows of the tourist-haunted streets of Florence, Tuscany can point with pride to a few really good artists, as, for example, the statues of the late Pio Fedi, whose celebrated group, "The Rape of Polyxena," adorns the Loggia dei Lanzi, and is held by half the sightseers as a classic work like its neighbours, or the groups of Dupré, whose Cain and Abel occupy an honoured place in the Pitti Palace amid the productions of the greatest masters of all time. As of old, so to-day, grace, and measure and artistic sobriety distinguish the Tuscan productions. But among the living, two rise head and shoulders above their fellows and merit more than a passing word, and these are Domenico Trentacoste and Rinaldo Carnielo.

Tuscan Sculptors.

By birth Trentacoste is really a Sicilian, but Florence is his home of study and election though for a while he resided in Paris. In his person he is a direct proof that there are still living in Italy, though few and far between, spiritual descendants of those choice and rare artists who were the glory of the Renaissance. And, indeed, if any such artists, marching on with the changed intellectual spirit of the time, were still among us, they would inevitably have become what Trentacoste is to-day. From the outset he worked from the living model, his only masters the *chef d'œuvres* of the Renaissance. After the manner of his prototypes he affects neither heroic art or large compositions, but chiefly inclines towards busts and single figures, and above all he loves to model the slender bodies of young girls on the threshold of

The Works of Domenico Trentacoste.

physical development and of boys barely adolescent. Their still, almost sexless, shapes acquire a pathetic charm under his hands. Further, he constantly searches for psychological intensity of expression, though never must this expression become contorted or otherwise than beautiful, even if sad. His salient characteristics are a noble feeling for form, a rarely fine technique, a scrupulous anatomical exactitude, with an innate repugnance for what is vulgar or puerile.

Trentacoste's works are mostly in private hands and largely in France, owned by persons who will not permit of their exhibition; and he himself, singularly careless of his own creations, has not even taken the precaution of securing photographs. The Roman National Gallery, however, owns an exquisite and typical work. It is called "At the Fountain," and has all the savour of a Greek idyl, of a Theocritan ode. It depicts the bust of an adolescent bearing an amphora on his shoulder from which the water gurgles. He is smiling the mysterious, half-mocking smile of fauns and other wild, half-conscious creatures of the woodland. The whole thing only consists of a head, a hand and a little piece of trunk, and yet what joyous vitality permeates the whole, both in mien and pose.

Trentacoste's originality may be said to consist in seeking not merely traditional, conventional beauty, but the beauty concealed in every natural object, if faithfully studied. It is on this point that he joins hands with the classics, but also where he departs from them. No classical sculptor would have chosen to represent the boy of "Alla Fonte" with a physiognomy that diverges from all the pragmatic art canons. But by thus diverging, Trentacoste has given individuality to the lad's head, and in individuality the modern artist has learnt to see a higher beauty than mere set features afford.

Ophelia is a theme that greatly attracts the artist. Of his various renderings the most charming is a head in high relief, floating upon the waves that lulled to rest Ophelia's saddened soul. He gives us here death in its poetic aspect,

wherefore this head has about it the fragrance of a lotus-flower, upheld on the face of the waters. The originality of it recalls the strange sculpture fancies of Rodin. There is rare purity in the spent gaze of the head still wreathed in daisies, amid which sea-weeds have interlaced, the eyelashes are drawn aside and parted as rushing waters would part them, enhancing the sensation that Ophelia is still being drawn along by the hurrying stream, and even yet not at rest.

The statue that first revealed Trentacoste to his countrymen, for before he was known chiefly in Paris and London, was that entitled "The Disinherited." We are made to understand that this young girl—she is perhaps just fifteen—has been left an orphan, with no longer even a roof over her head, and her wretched condition is such that she is correctly represented as absolutely nude. With a natural movement the poor child, hungry, cold and naked as she is, deserted and alone, wraps her arms about her body to hide the only treasure left to her, her virginity. The harmony, the general lines, the expression of the sad little face, the whole pose of the forlorn damsel, who thus chastely seeks to hide the barely nascent charms of her body, are a happy *trovata*. To hide or partially hide his figures or their faces is, perhaps, too favourite a device of Trentacoste's.

Once when in his studio I remarked the figure of a young girl weeping over a broken pitcher. Her face was so covered with her arms, over which sweeps a wealth of hair, that it took time to discover that there was a face at all. Were the figure placed a little higher it could be perfectly seen in all its beauty, which is the greater reward for the difficulty in finding. I remarked this to Trentacoste, who indignantly repudiated my suggestion, saying that if people wished to see the face they could take the trouble to stoop down. The whole fiercely independent character of the man is concentrated in this reply.

Indeed, it is by pose, by the forms taken by the body,

quite as much as by the face, that Trentacoste seeks to express the feelings of his figures. No wonder his countrymen name him "The Poet of Marble," for there is poetry hidden in all he touches.

Of a very different stamp is Carniêlo, whose statue, "The Dying Mozart," is one of the ornaments of the Luxembourg. He might be termed "the poet of death." Death has for him an overpowering attraction. He is a philosopher and a dreamer and the aphorism that sums up all his convictions is "the true note for a man who reflects is suffering," and regarding man, as he does, as a being born to suffer, this gives him a bias towards depicting death, the liberator from all woe. Yet Carniêlo is not at war with society, poor or unhappy, as might be inferred; he has no need to work for his bread, and his ideal has never to be sacrificed to making his works saleable.

The Statues of Carniêlo.

The "Dying Mozart" was carved when the artist was fresh from reading the life of the great musician. He was always and still is a great admirer of the "Nozze di Figaro" and "Don Giovanni," and thought the last moments of their author a subject worthy of statuary. This death of a genius is epic in its simplicity.

The resignation of Mozart is not seen in yet another of his famous statues, "The Capuchin Monk." The sentiment of death differs in these two works of Carniêlo's. The Capuchin is a young, vigorous monk, whose duty it is to bow his head and pray, but he cannot do so; who desires by vocation and obedience to lift his soul to God, but who is torn by thoughts of the world which gnaw at his vitals and divert him from fulfilling his trust. As he feels his strength give way in this sharp tussle, he invokes death to free him from the torment. It is absolute defection to his vocation and at the same time the feeling of duty that unite in causing him thus to pray for peace.

In "Tenax Vitae," an old man who has reached the last step of the ladder of existence, feels the ground giving way under

his feet. Death, in the horrible form of a skeleton, has him in his hold, and to crush him the more, presses his skull on the head of the old man. Here also, the struggling figure is that of a strong, muscular man, not that of a deformed, worn-out being, and he is more assailed by the fear of eternal life and of the infinite Unknown than by the pain of leaving this world. Has he sins to do penance for? Wicked actions to be pardoned? Who can tell. Although double the age of the Capuchin monk, like him he is robust, yet he does not invoke but repulses death. To the former death is looked upon as a joy, a release, to the veteran it is a pursuer from whom he fain would flee. In the dying Mozart death is slowly, gently, taking possession of its victim. All three subjects are pervaded by the same and yet a different sentiment, which only a real artist could understand and render with such perfection.

That this poet of death should be attracted by the terrible mystery of Golgotha is no wonder. Hence he has long worked at a Deposition from the Cross which when completed will consist of many figures over life-size. His incessant self-criticism, his carelessness with regard to his work, his dissatisfaction between ideal and achievement, render him apparently a slow worker and have certainly hindered prolific achievement. But one thing is fixed: Carniêlo is an artist who never stoops to make his work marketable, and whatever subject he takes in hand bears the imprint of the philosophy that pervades his thought and life. This is manifest even in a pretty series of statuettes representing every phase of Love, symbolised by the phases of the moon, one of his brightest, merriest works, though even here a tendency towards sadness predominates. In the end the woman is abandoned by Love. In fact these seven groups might be said to adumbrate the comedy of Love in all its phases.

This independent artist only accepts such commissions as conform with his convictions. Thus, he gladly executed an order from the widow of Lord Hobart to model for her a

group that should make graphic the horrors of war, Carnielo being as much opposed to that cruel destructive demon as the Peace Society itself.

Yet other good sculptors has modern Florence to show, but none of such originality as the two I have dealt with at length, though a word in passing must still be given to Clemente Origo, who is making a reputation for himself with his equestrian statues and statuettes, admirable for refinement of execution and intimate comprehension of the equine soul. A retired cavalry officer, he naturally understands horses, and also all that pertains to the army, which accounts for the success he recently scored in Paris with his group, "A Piece of Artillery in Peril."

Clemente Origo.

From what I have said it will be seen that in Italy as elsewhere in Europe the number of men who dedicate their talents to sculpture is less than those who paint, but at the same time I hope I have also proved that Italy is not so devoid of real artists in stone as it is the fashion to assume. Nor can it fail to be noted that in all the artists mentioned that commercial element is absent which of recent years had made contemporary Italian sculptors a bye-word, and rendered difficult the way of the earnest and gifted artist.

A branch of sculpture, that of wood-carving, is still an art in Italy, and masters in this craft are to be found in various towns, but particularly in Siena, Florence, and Pistoja. Greatest among these was Luigi Frullini, lately dead, whose cupids, children, fruit and flowers were of rare charm and excellence. Never did he attempt to force wood to perform the duties of marble or bronze, never did he forget his material, and invariably did he utilize it to the best advantage. Happily he has formed a school and has disciples, though none approach the master in skill and invention. Still their work is meritorious, and must not be confounded with the tasteful, clever,

Wood-Carving.

but rougher wood-carving that is turned out in such masses and which belongs to the domain of industrial art.

In no branch of artistic expression is less originality shown than in that of architecture. Here even more than in other departments the Italians are held in the bondage of their splendid past. No wonder, therefore, that her contemporary architects immerse themselves in the study of this past, and become lost in the process to modern demands. A few, however, have known how to bend and adapt the older splendid examples to latter-day needs and among these a high place must be accorded to Luca Beltrami and Camillo Boito, the brother of the musician. Milan can show some excellent specimens of their work. Both, also, are admirable restorers. It is to Beltrami that Milan owes the clever reconstruction of the famous Sforza Castle, now used as a museum to hold the records of Italy's political resurrection, the home of a quondam tyrant utilized to harbour the records of a newly acquired liberty.

Architecture.

An excellent restorer, too, is Alfredo d'Andrade, one of the most erudite architects that Italy can boast, who has specially devoted his attention to the mediæval castles in which Northern Italy, and in particular the Valley of Aosta, is so rich. A feudal fortified mansion erected for the Turin Exhibition in 1884 still remains as an ornament of the Valentino Park that skirts the banks of the Po, a synthesis of fifteenth-century Piedmontese art in every minutest particular, from the walls to the plates and dishes.

An Excellent Restorer.

What the vast monument planned long ago and begun but as yet far from complete that Rome is erecting to Vittorio Emanuele II. will prove, remains to be seen. The architect, Sacconi, who first designed it has died, and the whole matter now rests in the hands of a commission who constantly differ on minor and major points. Consequently when finished it will turn

An Example of Collectivism.

out an example of collectivism in art, and whatever good such a system may or may not effect in the social sphere it is scarcely to be anticipated that it will furnish good results in art, as by such means there must of necessity vanish that individual note that is the keystone of all true art.

But the sanctuary of the Third Italy is still in the making, and it is not fair to criticize the incomplete.

CHAPTER VI

PLAYHOUSES, PLAYERS, AND PLAYS

THE Italians are essentially a theatre-going people. Of this fact everyone can convince himself no matter in what Italian town he may be staying, for rarely are the playhouses aught but crowded; the play or the players must be poor indeed if they fail to attract. The Italian loves to spend his evening at the theatre, and he also likes that evening to be long, for the Italians, unlike the English, need little sleep, and four or five hours seem to suffice them. Therefore, the pieces are rarely allowed to be over until well past midnight, and in consequence although they seldom begin much before nine o'clock, the entre-actes are interminably long, permitting of exits during the waits and little gossips with friends in other parts of the house, or the discussion of a cup of coffee or a cigarette. "For," says the Italian, "if the play is over too early what am I to do with the rest of my evening?"

The Italians and the Drama.

This love for the theatre, be it of prose or of music, has led to the result that every Italian city, no matter how small, has its theatre, where from time to time good artists are seen on the boards, and which at other seasons may be occupied by amateur dramatic companies, of the kind that are numerous in the Peninsula.

This plethora of theatres dates, however, with few exceptions from the eighteenth century. To arrive at this result it was needful to combat the interdict laid by the Roman Church on playhouses and players. Not much more than one hundred years ago Cardinal Delfino, the Patriarch of Aquileja, bought up the theatre of Udine, then lately constructed and caused it to be razed because it was in his words, "a monument to pagan superstition."

Church versus Stage.

It may be wondered how some of the towns, and above all the smaller ones, could construct such fine, large edifices, theatres with a seating capacity generally far greater than that of the largest London or Paris playhouses. The needful capital was usually found by the formation of a company, in which shares were taken at a fixed price. Every family who bought a certain amount of shares was entitled to a box which permanently remained their property, and whence they could thus in perpetuity enjoy the spectacles without further expense, and whither they could also invite their friends free of charge. But in the course of time this faculty of inviting friends gratis came to be so abused that at last the theatres were often full of spectators who had not paid one halfpenny. In order to counteract this misapplication and to obtain some return for the ever increasing expense there was instituted that "Biglietto d'Ingresso" (entrance ticket), which is in use at all Italian theatres to this day, whether these have been primarily built on the company-system or no, and which so perplexes foreigners, who cannot understand that, besides paying for their seat, they still must pay for admission. These admission tickets if used alone allow of entrance to the pit only, but if anyone has friends in the house who have a box, armed with this ticket he has free access to join them. It is really a measure of self-defence, for as the theatres built on the above-named system have all their boxes pre-engaged in perpetuity, the managers were only able to sell the stalls (poltrone) and the reserved seats (posti distinti), and if the profits resulting from their sale were sufficient to cover outlay when the mounting was very simple, the illumination cheap and the pretensions of artists and public far less than they are to-day, it is completely inadequate to meet the immense cost demanded by the mounting of a modern drama. And this, too, despite the fact that staging in Italy has not yet attained the extravagant proportions of England and America.

Theatre Companies.

The Entrance Ticket.

Photo by *G. W. Wilson & Co.*

THE SCALA THEATRE, MILAN

But for these same reasons, and also because the best Italian actors, thanks to the higher salaries paid abroad, are too often absent from their native land, touring in South America, Russia, or Egypt, these playhouses, above all in the smaller centres, are often closed, in some cases even for years at a time. If, however, some provincial theatres remain thus shut, there are an immense number where a select and varied repertory is performed by excellent artists and which are open at least for some months a year. Among this number are the Manzoni of Milan, the Pergola and Niccolini of Florence, the Costanzi of Rome, the Alfieri of Turin, the Sannazaro of Naples. At one or other of these, elegant and highly critical and cultured audiences judge all the "premières" of Italian and foreign playwrights.

The Closing of Theatres.

Besides these aristocratic centres there also exist in the large cities a number of second-class theatres, frequented chiefly by the bureaucracy and the trading class, theatres in which smoking is allowed and where the tragedies of Alfieri and the comedies of Goldoni are still played. Still the fact that smoking is permitted by no means stamps a theatre as second-class. This abuse is licensed in many a playhouse and goes on during the acting of even the greatest artists, such as the Duse or Zacconi. It must often be a trial to the actors, we should think, to have to speak into a house reeking with tobacco and clouded by smoke.

Second-class Theatres.

The Italian theatre is altogether a curious institution and very different in all its customs from those of the rest of Europe. But it stands first in one respect, head and shoulders above all the rest of the world, and that is in the high quality of its acting. It is needful to say this here because the English public has formed erroneous judgments on this point owing to the fact that Salvini, Ernesto Rossi and Madame Ristori in the past, Eleanora Duse in the present, visited England with

High Quality of Acting.

scratch companies of which they were the only stars, thus giving a false idea of Italian theatrical talent.

Foundation of the Italian Drama.

The Italian theatre of to-day is a direct descendant of the so-called Commedie dell'arte, extremely artificial, stilted forms of dramatic composition which testified, it is true, to the quick and ready wit of the Italians, but also to a puerile taste. These plays were all performed by actors in masks, after the manner of the classic drama and the modern Japanese, and in the greater number of cases the players were merely furnished with the plot, leaving the situations of the play and the dialogue to be supplied on the moment by the invention of the actors themselves. This outline was often of the roughest nature, much after the manner of modern drawing-room charades, but there were certain stock characters, such as the Old Man who is the butt of the tricks and deceptions of the others, an extravagant son, scampish servants and corrupt or saucy chambermaids. It was Goldoni who released the Italian theatre from this bondage and together with Molière in France laid the foundations of the drama as it is understood in our day. "I had no rivals to combat," Goldoni himself tells in his autobiography, "I had only prejudices to surmount."

Theatrical Organization.

But some survivals of the older methods can be traced in the curious and unique organisation of the Italian theatrical world. As I have shown, the theatre buildings themselves either belong to the cities or to private persons, but none of these have permanent managers and a permanent company. On the other hand, there exist a number of managers who direct companies of recognised artists and own plays, scenery and other requisites. Between the proprietors of the buildings and the manager of the troupe arrangements are made on the basis that the company may play for a specified time in the playhouses in return for a percentage of the proceeds. Of such playhouses there are over 600 in the Peninsula.

The Italian theatrical year still follows the traditional players' Calendar of Goldoni's day. This theatrical year (l'anno comico) begins on Ash Wednesday, whenever that date may fall. From that day all theatrical engagements date. Then follows what is known as the first season, *i.e.*, Lent (la quaresima), which lasts till Easter. Then comes Spring (la primavera), that lasts till the end of May. June is reckoned as a season all by itself. From July till the end of September occasional representations are given. But the most important seasons are the autumn (l'autunno) that ends on Christmas Eve, and the Carnival season that begins on Christmas Day and ends on Shrove Tuesday. Consequently the routine of a first-class Italian company may follow such lines as these: Lent in Naples, Spring in Rome, June in Florence, where the roof is taken off the theatre and the heat mitigated, vacations in the summer, varied perhaps by occasional performances at watering-places or health resorts, the autumn in Genoa, the Carnival in Milan. In many of these cities the Municipality pay the manager a considerable subvention, or guarantee, as they are ambitious that good plays should be performed in their towns. In this way the eight or ten first-rate companies into which Italian actors are grouped perform a continual zig-zag throughout the length and breadth of the Peninsula, with the result that in the course of one year or at most two the entire public has a chance of seeing the best and newest plays and the best artists without moving from their homes.

The Theatrical Year.

Routine of a First-class Company.

And in the same way the towns of second and third rank are catered for by companies of second and third-rate merit. By this curious arrangement, which is fatiguing and costly to the actors, the public is certainly the gainer, for it can see and hear all the novelties, and its critical acumen and artistic perception is cultivated. Hence the Italian theatrical public is more critical, more appreciative, but also more intolerant

than any in Europe. And this does not spring wholly from their more emotional temperament but really from the fact that their taste has been educated and refined. These wandering appearances are also beneficial to the actors. No man or woman can grow fat and lazy in the approval of their fellow citizens. They must be always on the alert, for what pleases in Rome by no means necessarily pleases at Milan, and one Italian town rather prefers not to endorse the verdict of another. For the old rivalries between the cities are by no means extinct and therefore no local celebrities but only genuine celebrities win a name.

Of course, the system has its disadvantages also. Among these, as regards the actors, is the expense of constant change of abode, for they have to pay their own travelling and housing expenses; this is rendered yet more onerous from the fact that salaries are exceedingly small. Nor can they be otherwise, seeing the low prices charged for admission and seats. At the arena in Florence, for example, where the best plays and players can be seen, a stall and entrance now costs two francs, but until three years ago it only cost 1 f. 50 c. And this is no exception but rather the rule. Under these circumstances of course the staging suffers. First, there are not funds sufficient to meet the extravagant modern requirements, moreover if a manager must be always on the road and has to carry with him all his paraphernalia it is obvious that he will reduce these to the slenderest and most indispensable proportions. In many large cities one or other of the leading furniture firms will lend some of their goods as a sort of advertisement of their wares. D'Annunzio has introduced reforms in this respect also. He mounts his plays with great care and luxury, but it needs a deep purse and a big success to follow his example. For it must be remembered, in justice to Italian theatrical managers, that they have no long runs to compensate them for their outlay. A play is rarely repeated more than two nights consecutively, is perhaps only

Small Prices for Admission.

played four or five times during the company's stay in a town. The Italian theatre public demands and expects incessant variety, for they will go to the play night after night and hence require novelty of spectacle.

The composition of the companies in a measure helps to the excellence of the *ensemble*, though it also leads to restrictions.

Composition of the Companies.

For these companies are still composed after a given recipe, such as prevailed in the Commedie dell'arte. First in order comes the prima attrice (leading lady) and the primo attore (leading actor) who have the right of monopolising the principal parts in a play. Then comes the leading young lady, and leading young man, who play the rôles of the lovers, provided these rôles are not the chief in the piece, in which case they fall to the first-named actors. Further, there are the "mother" and the character actor or heavy gentleman, but to the latter only elderly parts fall. Younger rôles are absorbed by the primo generico (light comedy man) and the seconda donna (second lady), who is his pendant. An important personage is the "brillante," who is something between a smart comedian, a heavy utility, and a character actor, to whom fall all slightly comic rôles that do not represent elderly men, in which case they belong of rights to the character actor. For some plays a "brillante" is needed for the leading male part, but he cannot assume it without the express assent of the leading actor, whose right it is, so fixed is hierarchical precedence in the histrionic world. Besides these chief actors the company counts some 20 or so persons male and female who are engaged under the collective title of generici (general), and who have to fill all the remaining rôles. Walking ladies and gentlemen are engaged in each town as required, since carrying them around would add too greatly to the expenses of travel. The prompter unfortunately still holds an important place, and his ugly box, breaking the line of the footlights, is not only an eyesore but a real interruption to enjoyment for he

prompts so loudly that it needs some little oral practice not to hear him rather than the actors.

The theatres, however, in which the soul of the Italian people can best be studied, are the popular houses of which there are an untold number. Here are usually performed, evening after evening, the most blood-curdling tragedies and dramas in which every act is adorned with at least two or three deaths or murders. The public that frequents these resorts becomes so hardened to this species of theatrical criminology that they would return home quite dissatisfied if they had not seen seven or eight deaths occur upon the stage. As a rule these popular theatres paste up huge coloured advertisements of a highly spiced and dramatic character at the street corners, announcing what they will play that evening. The title as a rule is exceedingly high flown, and so crowded with adjectives and sesquipedalian words that it takes up three or four lines of the broad sheet, while the picture reproduces in glaring colours a salient scene from the drama. This serves to acquaint those who cannot read (and among the populace there are still unfortunately many such) with the nature of the play, and that there will be presented at least one death or one assassination. The plays thus presented are generally put together by the manager and are often a hotch-potch of some popular crimes.

The Popular Houses.

There are, however, other folk-theatres to which the entrance fee is only thirty or fifty centimes where nothing but classic plays are performed. On these stages the Shakespearian repertory is one of the chief attractions, but Sophocles, Aeschylus and Euripides also draw large audiences. Hence it need arouse no surprise if some day, walking through the streets, say, of Rome or Florence, we may hear a workman in shirt-sleeves or a coster pushing a barrow, repeating to himself Hamlet's "To be or not to be," or some speech of Othello's or phrase of Lady Macbeth's, naturally spoken in Roman or

Representations of Classic Plays.

Tuscan dialect, and with certain additions or changes according to the speaker's memory or artistic taste. It is most amusing at these representations to note the costumes worn by the actors. Once I saw Hamlet dressed in a velvet shooting suit, modified for the occasion, which he had borrowed from one of the audience, who in return was admitted free of charge. On another occasion the helmets of the Roman soldiers had a suspicious resemblance to kitchen saucepans, while their paste-board armour showed too evident signs of wear and presented many transparencies.

The Marionettes.

Yet a third species of popular theatre is that of the marionettes, so characteristic, so full of national and local colour that it would merit a chapter all to itself. On these miniature stages, often placed inside the larger proscenium, by the aid of armour and swords of tin, and precious stones of glass, often with no other illuminant than a petroleum lamp, are put on all the epic and heroic tales of mediæval chivalry, the Knights of the Round Table, the valiant deeds of Arthur, Charlemagne, and Roland. Here are enacted popular versions not only of Tasso's Jerusalem and Ariosto's Orlando, which are after all Italian classics, but scenes from the Spanish "Cid," the Iliad and the Odyssey. The Paladins of France in their shining armour are ever the popular favourites, and wagers are laid upon the results of their doughty deeds, their actions are spoken of as though they were those of living men. Applause greets their appearance and their acts, but even more thundering hand-clapping is given to the pigmy who kills a giant or a fiery dragon. It is hugely comic to see these wooden puppets attempt a bow of acknowledgment. It is wonderful on the other hand how life-like and real their movements are made to appear, with what skill and dexterity the managers of such marionettes work their wires or strings from behind the mimic scenes. There is none of the clumsiness and rudeness of our Punch and Judy shows, shows that are a direct derivation from these Italian puppets. Often in these theatres one

historic or legendary theme will be continued for months and the interest of the public is maintained from night to night by the same devices as are employed by fashionable novelists whose works appear in newspaper feuilletons. It is in Sicily and in the Neapolitan provinces that theatres of this class are seen at their best, and incredible though it sounds, these spectacles sometimes lead to rustic duels and deeds of blood, that occur between one act and another outside the little playhouse, the only cause being, perhaps, that one man has asserted that Roland after he has grown mad never recovers, while another sustains a contrary opinion.

The Players.

So much for the playhouses. Now for the players. Whatever the theatres in Italy lose in spectacular effects from the poverty of companies, from antiquated methods, it is all more than compensated for by the excellence of the acting. Those who visit Italy without frequenting the theatres little realize how great is the artistic treat they miss. No matter even if they do not understand the speech. The manner, the presentation is so compelling, it will and must leave some impression. And in many cases plays are performed which are already known in translation or are translations of French, German, or English dramas. Who would credit it, for example, that "Charley's Aunt," that typically and essentially English play, is even more comic in its Italian than in its English dress?

Modernization of the Theatre.

The modernization of the Italian theatre, like all else in modern Italy, was connected with the national movement. The first impetus was given by the actor-manager and patriot, Gustavo Modena, the teacher of Salvini and Rossi, and his work was continued by Bellotti-Bon, whose tragic suicide in 1883 was universally deplored. It was these two men who strove in the dramatic domain to arouse the slumbering capacities of their nation. Freedom they contended was a needful condition for the development of art and they utilized their

wandering artistic existence to spread patriotic ideas. Only by a fluke did Bellotti-Bon escape being shot by the Austrians when, for example, one evening in the middle of a play he pulled out of his pocket, in lieu of his handkerchief, as though by mistake, the forbidden Italian flag. Of course, thundering applause greeted the white, red and green colours. When Italy went into the field against the hated Austrians he left the stage and fought for his fatherland, only returning to the boards after the luckless battle of Novara in 1849, when the army of Charles Albert, King of Sardinia, the father of Victor Emmanuel, was utterly routed by the Austrian troops. Bellotti-Bon's programme ran "We must first improve ourselves, then art, and then the public." It was he who, following in the footsteps of Modena, discovered and trained all the eminent actors who during the last half-century have honoured the Italian stage. The Duse, who alone is well known abroad, is no isolated miraculous phenomenon, as foreigners suppose; she is the legitimate outcome and zenith of a system. And that system is quite unlike the French. In France actors are trained to be artistic, there are certain stage conventions that must ever be observed, the theatre is no exact reflex of real life. The Italian school, on the other hand, as re-created by Bellotti-Bon, strives after perfect naturalism, each actor is encouraged to reproduce the playwright's characters through the alembic of his own temperament, which must not be overlaid. For this cause the Duse, for instance, will often refuse to play a part which an outsider may think exactly suited to her. "I do not feel it," she will say, and if she does not feel it she cannot play it. The Italian actor is encouraged to speak, laugh and weep, to be tender or harsh just as he would in real life. They were not to represent such and such a character, they were really to *be* that person, to feel like they would feel, to put themselves into that character's place. In this way the human being is not absorbed in his part, but the part is incorporated with

Principles of Acting.

the human being, resulting in great naturalness and in the fact that Italian actors are human beings when on the stage and not mimes or puppets.

Such is the fundamental principle that regulates the modern Italian stagecraft, a reversal in short of the system in vogue elsewhere, and consequently there is no declamation, no theatrical pose, indeed an absence of just what is usually meant by the term "theatrical," *i.e.*, a schism between reality and counterfeit. Salvini was, of course, rather of the old school. His was the grand style, declamatory and rhetorical, more like the English Irving, his methods would now be called old-fashioned, but his splendid personality, his magnificent, rich and sonorous voice, his well-declaimed periods, permit him even now that he is an old man to fill the stage and hold his audience spellbound as of yore.

No Declamation.

In speaking of Italian histrionic artists it must ever be borne in mind that the Italians in general and those of the south in particular, may be regarded as actors by nature. Their easily-excited temperaments, their inclination towards expressive gesture language, their eager eloquence of speech, as well as a great inherent facility in the contraction of the muscles of their face, endow them with rare scenic qualities. And it is perchance owing to this natural disposition of the people that Italy has so many good actors. Nor do they require to go through a long training. Indeed, many of those best known to-day in the Peninsula have attained their high rank without special study, and nearly all have revealed themselves to the public by a curious chapter of accidents. Thus, for example, one evening some forty years ago a comedy was played in which a police sergeant had a part. This public official was always hissed in his rôle, which was displeasing to the audience, but this night he was enthusiastically clapped. The author, amazed at this change of front, inquired who had interpreted the applauded personage. He was told

Native Eloquence and Dramatic Expression.

Photo by *de Maschi Carlo, Milan*

ERMETE ZACCONI

Ermete Novelli, and from that day the man who is now one of the best Italian actors, came rapidly to the front.

Ermete Novelli.

Nor is it only Italy that acclaims him. I was myself present a few years ago when he made his triumphal début in Paris, and the enthusiasm he excited among that cultured, critical public was indescribable. He is certainly one of the most versatile and original, as well as the most amusing and ductile actor of our day. The public is entirely under his influence, laughing or weeping as he bids or leads. His clear, resounding and suggestive voice, his tall, pliable person, his mobile facial muscles, enable him to adapt himself to any personality. A bit of a philosopher, an artist at heart, he studies internal and external life with the sharp vision of a Democritus. There is a breeziness and elasticity about his personality that makes him attractive at first sight. No wonder he is nicknamed throughout the Peninsula *il simpaticone* (the most sympathetic). His comic "gag," his quick perception of the ludicrous, as well as his tender pathos, are his distinguishing characteristics. But mere words cannot describe him. That is the drawback of the actor's art. As Buffon phrases it, dramatic artists *parlent au corps par le corps ;* if we cannot see or hear them their art is as nothing. It is, therefore, impossible by verbal description to reproduce the impression of their personality. I can only draw attention here to some of the best and advise my readers if they come across them to go and see for themselves.

Ermete Zacconi may also be said to incarnate the modern conscience. But in him there is no comic vein. Ibsen has been his master, he has studied modern pathology and psychology, with the result that his impersonations are penetrated with a realism that is at times almost too impressive. No one, for example, who has seen him act in Ibsen's "Ghosts" will ever forget the painful truthfulness of his rendering of the hero's slowly encroaching paralysis. His diseased methods

Ermete Zacconi.

of sitting and standing, the pathological movements of his feet and hands, are all rendered with perfect exactitude. And every character he assumes is thus subtly penetrated and vivified.

Zacconi was a pupil of the powerful tragedian, Emanuel, whose premature death deprived the Italian stage of a fine Shakespearian scholar. From his master he has imbibed a culture of the serious, a love for the terrible and fearsome. Hence it is the Northern playwrights such as Ibsen, Grillparzar, Tolstoi, Hauptmann, and Gorki who chiefly attract him, and whose paradoxes and transcendentalism, exotic plants on Italian soil, he has made not only palatable but acceptable to the younger generation of spectators. He has also tried as actor-manager to break down the hierarchical precedence of the Italian stage, not always suitable to modern plays, but so far with scant success.

An actor of culture and ability, with a fine presence and a resonant voice is Gustavo Salvini, the son of the great Tommaso, who endeavours to emulate his celebrated sire by reviving the old romantic dramas. He has shown, however, of late that he can also interpret plays more in conformity with current taste.

Gustavo Salvini.

Fumagalli and Scarneo are other good tragedians. The latter is further distinguished by his literary ambition and daring innovations. Thus, recently he staged Lord Byron's romantic Mystery of "Cain," which even has never before been attempted on the English boards. And it is a testimony to the cultured perception of Italian audiences that this metaphysical poem was listened to with rapt attention and understanding by a crowded house.

Good Tragedians.

Oreste Calabresi is one of the finest character-actors of the younger school, who, without sacrificing anything that was excellent in the old styles, has adapted them to more modern forms. He shines above all in social comedies,

Photo by *Guigoni & Bossi, Milan*

ELENORA DUSE

for his humorous vein is pronounced. Together with other excellent actors and actresses, such as Irma Grammatica, Ruggeri, and Giovannini, I must not omit the fine tactful comedian, Virgilio Talli, who is part-manager of the company called Talli-Grammatica-Calabresi, one of the strongest and best that can anywhere be found. This company, with which Eleonora Duse and Giacinta Pezzana play at times is the one that has so splendidly interpreted the plays of d'Annunzio, contributing largely to their scenic success.

Oreste Calabresi.

All the world now knows the name of Eleonora Duse, but it is not so very long ago since she was a pale, thin understudy, a pupil of Giacinta Pezzana, of whose artistic powers the public knew nothing, and whom her own people, actors themselves, had pronounced devoid of talent. It was in a rather worthless piece by Alexander Dumas, fils, "La Princesse de Bagdad," that she first revealed her wonderful dramatic gifts. She was so irresistibly bewitching, so insinuatingly seductive in the scene of the second act in which she has to persuade a banker to give over to her a million in gold, that not only the banker, who was there for that purpose, but the whole of the public was subjugated. From that evening onward there no longer existed the pale, thin understudy. There had sprung into being Eleonora Duse. The profound weariness of voice and members, the almost dazed abandon, the slowly chiselled words that burn and bite like drops of corrosive acid on a metal plate, the serpentine attitudes that seem to repress the expression of the passion that is quivering within, only to burst forth at last with volcanic ardour, the intellectual physiognomy that for years disdained any artificial make-up, and a face which reflects all the shades of emotion,—all these gifts combined make of Eleonora Duse the supreme artist who embodies within herself the decadent, neurasthenic and acutely nervous soul of contemporary Latin society. In our day of fevered existences, when love is a convulsion that

Eleonora Duse.

ends too often in suicide and murder, the serene quiet idealized histrionic methods had grown inadequate to represent the modern soul. This was understood by Eleonora Duse and gave an innovating impulsion to her art. And truly with her unrivalled power over the emotions she is at her grandest and most original in these parts in which she pourtrays the neurasthenic tumults of the female soul.

That she can, however, play pure comedy when she likes she proves in Goldoni's " Locandiera," a piece with which she reaps triumphs in and outside of Italy.

Excellent Actresses.

It goes without saying that Eleonora Duse has found a crowd of imitators among the younger Italian actresses, but none possess the secret of her agitated throes, her undulating movements, or are able to communicate such tremors to their audiences. Still, superb though Eleonora Duse is, one would not wish her to found a school. It would be too limited in range, its notes too few. Happily, Italy can boast other excellent actresses, such as Virginia Reiter, a realist of full, rich voice and grand aspect, Teresa Mariani, admired for her fine interpretations, the sisters Irma and Emma Grammatica, of whom Emma especially promises to have a great future before her, for she has a penetrating comprehension and acts with feeling and skill equal to none but a few; and last but by no means least Tina di Lorenzo, who conquers all hearts with her youthful charm and sprightly impersonations.

It is wearisome to pile names upon names, especially in speaking of actors, for no art is more ephemeral, more personal than this. I can but repeat what I said above that on all Italian stages the level of acting is of a high quality and the reform of the theatre is likely to come from here. It will substitute the natural for the artificial, the spontaneous for the studied, psychological realism for stage artifice.

Before closing this chapter a word must still be said of that original class of dramatic troupes of which a certain number exist in Italy called Dialect Companies. Of these almost

every province has one, usually directed by an able actor-manager. In these companies, instead of reciting in good Italian, the dialect of the province is employed, that dialect that is still so much spoken throughout the Peninsula, and which prevents the people from welding more quickly into a compact whole. Generally the plays chosen also reflect the province, but sometimes an Italian play is translated into dialect. Of these dialect companies that sometimes tour through the Peninsula like the other associated actors, visiting the various cities, in which they are often but scantily understood, one of the most noted is that of the Milanese Edoardo Ferravilla. As a comic actor he is inimitable and makes even those laugh who do not understand him. And the Milanese dialect lends itself peculiarly well to biting jokes and caustic sarcasms. Good humour and joyfulness is the key-note of the Neapolitans, who are directed by Edoardo Scarpetta, whose quips and cranks are the talk of Naples. The Venetians, with their soft sibilant speech, still uphold the honour of their native Goldoni and are gentle and fluid like to their city. Strong, almost to savagery, on the other hand, and original to the last degree, are the Sicilians directed by Grasso, actor, manager and playwright all in one, whose pieces each and all are little bits of Sicilian life and manners transplanted bodily upon the stage. It is almost impossible with these Sicilians to credit that this is merely acting. It seems as though the fiery passions that boil under Etna's shade had been let loose and were made visible to our unaccustomed eyes.

Dialect Companies.

So much, too succinctly perhaps, concerning the playhouses and players. Now for the plays.

With regard to its dramatic production the Italian theatre rather resembles a tree the branches of which have been lopped by a storm, but which in spring is yet once more clothed in fresh and tender green, since the trunk had struck deep and solid roots. Until quite a few years ago dramatic production

Dramatic Production.

was at a low ebb. Only a few branches were left on the old trunk and these produced little fruit. The repertory of Goldoni, the sock and buskin tragedies of Alfieri, the pseudo-mediævalism of Giacosa, the patriotic romanticism of Cavalotti, no longer appealed to or completely satisfied the nervous spirit of modern society, weary of artificiality and of inflation. It was then that occurred the Northern invasion. Translations of Ibsen, of Sudermann, of Tolstoi, of Maeterlinck, as well as the whole repertory of Sardou and an infinity of French playwrights, inundated the Italian stage and silenced or led astray her native writers. That it is no longer needful to see a foreign name upon the play-bill in order to attract, and that it is recognised that even among the older discarded plays there is good material, is due first and foremost to Gabriele d'Annunzio. Honour where honour is due. In the chapter devoted to Literature I have treated of his plays at length, so it is not needful to speak of them again. His influence has certainly been far-reaching in more than one respect, both on and off the boards. He flashed upon the theatre at a moment when the foreign influence was at its height, with the noble aim of recalling the Italian stage to its best national traditions and replacing the journeyman phrases of the translator by the splendid Italian tongue. And he certainly succeeded. That d'Annunzio was not happy at first in the theatrical environment, that even now, when he has achieved world-wide success, it is permissible to doubt if he has real dramatic talent, is beside the mark. The fact remains that he revolutionized the modern Italian theatre.

Influence of Gabriele d'Annunzio.

It is a curious fact, illuminating the Italian character, that while problem and philosophical plays are not specially liked by them, historical plays, such as a Northern public pronounces dull, are in high favour. This taste originates, perhaps, in the classical traditions of the Italians. Appeals to antiquity find an echo

Historical Plays.

among every class of playgoers, and, curiously enough, this response is, if possible, keener in the lower than the upper social ranks, for the lower classes in Italy, save perhaps a section of very advanced Socialists, still feed upon the splendid records of their national story. It would seem as though for them the historical play, appealing to their love of country, was the lineal outcome of that tragedy, the dominant element in the Greek and Roman theatre, of which they consider themselves the natural heirs. Didactic plays, on the other hand, the public will not stand. They laugh, they hiss, they talk, they call the curtain down. And an Italian public is the most critical and merciless in the world. Not even an old favourite can save a situation. As in music, they will not tolerate a false note, and without pity whistle a trembling *débutante* or a worn-out artist off the stage, so at the play they will not endure being sermonized, instructed, or bored. Only what bores other nations does not bore them, and *vice versa*. Thus, they will listen for hours, and with the most rapt attention, to what a Northerner would call empty flights of rhetoric; they will applaud to the echo interminable speeches of richly coloured words and rolling periods, regardless of the fact that when reduced to plain speech they contain few ideas, and are compounded chiefly of "words, idle words"; sufficient if they are musically woven and tickle the sensitive and innately true ear of the Italian. Hence in part the great and overwhelming success achieved by Gabriele d'Annunzio, understood by few foreigners, to whom too much of the work of this undoubted genius seems "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

Didactic Plays Unpopular.

In this connection it may be mentioned that plays in verse are favoured on the Italian stage, whose actors have that rare gift of knowing how to speak in rhythm without mouthing or affectations.

Many and notable are the younger generation of playwrights who have found a native note and no longer depend

on inspiration or suggestion from beyond the Alps. Indeed, the nations beyond the Alps are now beginning to return the compliment and are rifling in the Italian camp. Among those who have thus penetrated beyond the borders of their native land, Roberto Bracco, the Neapolitan, is one of the most able. His plays always evoke thought and provoke discussion, for Italians who really love the theatre and understand it in the right way, do not merely go there to have eye and ear tickled. At first a disciple of the Northern schools of Ibsen and Hauptmann, Bracco is a Southerner of the truest type who had fused northern and southern influences, with the curious result that, it may be said, his plays reveal a northern artistic temperament while they are locally quite Neapolitan in spirit, for the scene of all Bracco's plays is laid in Naples, and all his personages present Neapolitan characteristics. Nevertheless, his plays are not really provincial; he only utilises the characters he knows best in order to present a situation or mental dilemma of universal interest. He oscillates from farce to drama, a wonderful "zig-zag" (the word is his own definition of himself), revealing all his merits as a conscientious artist, a stern self-critic, indefatigable in his search after improvement. What is common to all his pieces is an exquisite diction and a lively and life-like dialogue, while his dramatic skill is proved when he sustains a three-act play with only three personages. Bracco, moreover, is young, and he certainly has not yet said his last dramatic word.

The Playwrights.

Roberto Bracco.

A vigorous dramatic temperament is that of E. A. Butti, of whose novels I have already spoken in the Literature section. He began his playwright's career with a drama entitled "Utopia," in which a father and daughter commit suicide when they feel that they have lost faith. This religious problem, this affirmation that all in this world cannot be explained by science and materialism; and that with the loss of faith is lost

Plays of E. A. Butti.

the power of leading an ideal life, is the keynote of all his work. There always predominates what might be called the Hamlet problem, that is to say, atheism at war with faith, a future life with its promised glories contrasted with disappearance into the darkness of matter.

Of course, in order to follow these plays a good knowledge of Italian is requisite. This is less needful with the comedies of Marco Praga, also an innovator, but less given to subtle emotions. His comic and tragic situations can be apprehended by eye and gesture. He inclines to deal with the tragic and humorous sides of female existence, and this is specially marked in his "Mama" and "Moglie Ideale" (The Ideal Wife). Vigorous and vivacious in situations is Girolamo Rovetta, whose plays deal largely with the days when Italy was in the making, the times of aspiration and struggle. His action is rapid, his speech full-blooded, his characters highly coloured, holding our attention even when on maturer reflection we feel or at least hope there is some exaggeration in his historical presentment.

Marco Praga.

Girolamo Rovetta.

Light comedy writers are Lopez and Giannino Antona Traversi, both men of brilliance and grace of touch. The latter especially made a notable success with his play, "La Mattina Dopo" (The Next Morning), where in a few scenes is depicted with courage and incisive strokes the corruption that reigns in the *grand monde*. This same purpose pervades the subtle little play, "Il Braccialetto" (The Bracelet), in which this ornament, bought for the purpose of seduction, is purchased by the lady's husband from the desire to do a good stroke of business. The author's aim is to show how conjugal fidelity may be set aside for a mere bit of jewellery. Still more fierce in these respects are others of his pieces. He also scathes the rich bourgeoisie that aspires to be noble, and the aristocrat who abases himself to refurnish his strong box. Perhaps

Comedy Writers.

some of these productions would be judged as too free and outspoken in England, but their ultimate purpose is high.

Of *poetades* Italy produces few. It prefers to import them ready-made from Paris. And such as they have are a little too heavy in touch. In the same way in acting those imported the movement is not sufficiently quick and brilliant to cover over the manifest absurdities, and the Italian language is also too classic to permit of its debasement into slang and double-edged phrases.

Historical plays will perhaps be those that the foreigner can follow best, though they are not those in which the peculiar genius of the Italian writers is best seen. I must still, however, mention as noteworthy productions of recent years the "Nero" of Arrigo Boïto, the composer of "Mefistofele," a work in which the matricide is brought before us at the moment of his remorse, that in this histrionic nature took theatrical shape, the "Robespierre" of that subtle literary critic, Domenico Oliva, and the "Julius Cæsar" of Enrico Corradini, one of the chief supporters of the neo-Imperialist movement in the Peninsula,—though of course Imperialism in this country takes a different form from that of England, and denotes rather a leaning towards autocracy and conservatism.

Recent Noteworthy Productions.

Such is a bird's-eye view of players and plays. In both respects, but especially in the domain of plays, it may confidently be asserted that the century that began with a general decadence in these departments, has witnessed such a rehabilitation and revival that it may confidently be predicted that the new century will carry it to newer and greater glories.

CHAPTER VII

SCIENCE AND INVENTIONS

In the domain of science Italy has ever been *facile princeps*. Do we not owe to her Galileo and Volta, Beccaria, and Cisalpino, was it not an Italian, Amerigo Vespucci, who first sighted America and gave the new-found continent its name? The Roman dialect-poet, Pascarella, in a series of witty sonnets relating the discovery of America by Columbus, makes his peasant-narrator tell how the Italians are of such ready inventive power that the smallest trifle that others would overlook inspires them with a prolific idea. "An Italian," he says, "sees a man pull up a lamp, he thinks a minute and then, by Jove, he knows that the earth goes round, he thinks again and he invents the telescope. Yet another sees a frog that seems dead, he touches it with a spade and notices that it moves, and what does he do? On another man it would have made no effect—an Italian invents electricity."

Inventive Power of the Italians.

There is really scant exaggeration in all this. Most of the older and newer inventions are due in the first instance to Italians, such as, for example, the telephone, the typewriter, incandescent lamps, and many other things, but unfortunately the poverty of the country and of the individual has usually hindered them from deriving the advantages from their inventions that have been reaped by others.

More fortunate in this respect has been Guglielmo Marconi, whom all the world now knows. By his invention of wireless telegraphy, or rather by his application of a physical law, he has made an innovation of far-reaching moment, and one of which we are only just reaping the first-fruits. This young man, one of the great glories of modern Italy, is also in a measure

Wireless Telegraphy.

an English glory, for though his father was an Italian and he was born at Bologna in 1875, his mother is English. It is from her, no doubt, he inherits his practical ability. It was at the University of Bologna that he prosecuted his studies, already then inclining towards physical science. When he quitted it he applied all his time and strength to the study of electricity, and it was only after great labour and endless experiments that he succeeded in rendering practicable his dream of transmitting messages without wires, a scheme that was considered a wild dream fifty years back.

Yet another Italian of note, of whom we shall probably hear even more in the future, is Giuseppe Pino, of Vicenza. He has invented a boat that permits a descent into the lowest depths of the sea, and thus is not only able to penetrate its mysteries but to raise the lost artistic and material treasures immersed for ages in the ocean. His first invention was a hydroscope, that is to say, a species of large telescope by means of which it is possible to see into the deepest sea depths. Nor is it needful to look into the instrument to behold the marvels it reveals. By a clever contrivance its range of vision can be reflected upon a sheet, so that in future it will be possible for the passengers of a ship sailing over the ocean to see with their own eyes the wonders above which they are floating. In connection with this he has further constructed a species of submarine that he calls a " working boat," furnished with a pair of arms with which it can grapple and lift any object to bring it up to the surface. It is, of course, worked by a powerful internal electric motor. In shape it is not unlike a cannon ball, if a cannon ball had a short funnel and two long arms, and all around it are windows, closed with strong concave plate glasses out of which the submarine navigator can see all that is going on around him.

Pino's Inventions.

It was in 1900 that Pino made his first experiments in the Ligurian waters ; they succeeded admirably and far surpassed the inventor's expectations. Pino was able to gather and

bring to the surface a great quantity of objects purposely thrown into the sea to test his invention, among them a capsized boat. The "Society for Raising the Treasures of the Deep" at once seized on this discovery and Pino had a boat of larger proportions built on purpose for them. An attempt, among others, is to be made to raise the gold that is thought to be on board the Spanish galleons sunk at the time of the Great Armada.

Account of his Submarine Descents.

Pino's own accounts of his submarine descents are of extreme interest, and truly he never makes one of his subaquean voyages without bringing back matter of moment and of scientific value. He tells how he has by this time become so accustomed to the bottom of the sea that he can describe it as minutely as the roads he traverses when he goes home every evening from his workshop. It is curious to learn that the bottom of the sea is covered with a mass that resembles ashes and that sand is rarely found. The sand ends at a certain depth, and hence Pino argues that at the depth where the sand and gravel cease, there ceases also the action of storms. Lower down the floor is muddy, but of a light kind of mud, such as is found in a street after a short shower of rain. On this account, that at the real ocean bottom tempests and submarine currents have no power, it is not true that foundered vessels become buried in subaqueous earth, as has until now been affirmed. Yet another popular assertion that the light of the sun cannot penetrate deeper into the sea than 85 metres has also been dispelled by Pino. He says that he has never yet gone to a depth at which the light failed him to see distinctly even the minutest objects or to read small print. And even on dark days, when the sun in the heavens is covered with clouds, there is always a sufficiency of light in the lowest deeps.

Another curious fact that Pino emphasizes is the circumstance that when down below in the ocean a man has no more sense of being submerged in water than we on the earth have

of being bathed in air. Further, he has proved, after over 200 descents to the sea's bottom, that the supposed physical law of the repulsion of the water, and that this force augments with the increased density of the water, is incorrect, for he never had to increase the weight of his boat in order to go lower.

Pino waxes eloquent when speaking of the submarine flora. He says it recalls in wealth of colour and mass that of the Tropics. There are shrubs, too, down in these regions, and species of small trees about 3 metres high, not unlike firs and cypresses. As for the fish, they abound, but differ in species and size according to the different levels traversed. In the lowest regions are found the largest kinds, but rarely, almost never, are the fish that appertain to one region met with in another.

Pino is enthusiastic concerning his discovery, and its bearing upon the future, where it will serve the interests both of pure science and of commerce. He even goes so far as to believe that in no very distant future an excursion to the sea depths of a hundred metres will become as common a form of sport as a trip in an automobile. This latter may be a dream, but it is a dream with a solid substratum of reality.

While Pino has taken for his domain the ocean, Giovanni Schiaparelli has annexed the skies. He is the greatest living authority in aerography. It is to him, beside other important astronomical discoveries and observations that the world owes a topographical map of the planet Mars. He first observed the strange canals that intersect that planet, and first noted, too, that at certain seasons of the year these are doubled.

Aerography and Astronomy.

Indeed, Italy is rich both in able astronomers and in excellent observatories, not the least excellent among which is that attached to and financed by the Vatican. This Vatican Observatory has contributed to the classification and nomenclature of clouds by means of a photographic atlas.

The Italian's skill and delicacy of hand, his mathematical capacity and keen powers of observation assist him in the prosecution of all studies that require nicety of aptitude.

Partly for this reason, and also largely no doubt because of the many volcanoes that exist in the land, Italy's scientists are the first in all that pertains to seismology and vulcanism. For some reason unknown it is the clergy who are chiefly active in these departments. Thus the Barnabite padre Bertelli has invented a tremometre that records the slightest earth tremors; another Barnabite father has amplified this into a photographic tremometre, that thus fixes its own records. Yet others have built instruments so delicate that they register earthquakes taking place at thousands of miles distant, and can even locate them long before the telegram arrives announcing the disaster.

Seismology and Vulcanism.

Foremost among these earthquake students stands Padre Alfani, of Florence, and in all that relates to volcanic lore Professor Mateucci, of Naples, he who so bravely remained at his post in the Observatory on the flanks of Vesuvius during the terrible eruption of the spring of 1906.

From early times Italians have been intrepid travellers, and during the last decades they have not belied their fame. Discoveries of unknown territories in Africa and Asia are due to their enterprise and their powers of physical endurance, powers enhanced beyond question by their frugal methods of living and their abstinence from, or moderation in, the drinking of spirituous liquors.

Travels and Geography.

No mean geographer and scientist is H.R.H. Luigi di Savoia, Duke of the Abruzzi, who in his voyages of discovery has emulated the great Italians of the fifteenth century, such as Marco Polo, Amerigo Vespucci, and Christopher Columbus, planting the Italian flag on the Arctic Ice at 86° 33′ of latitude, this being the nearest point to the North Pole ever

Voyages of the Duke of the Abruzzi.

yet reached by any man. But before doing this the intrepid Prince, who is by profession a seaman, had also been the first to ascend Mount Elias in Alaska.

A Polar Expedition.

It was in 1899 that the Duke left Archangel on board the *Stella Polare* (Polar Star), a vessel he had bought in Norway, and which he had caused to be specially fitted and adapted for an expedition into the polar regions. After no small difficulties the vessel reached the Bay of Teplitz in Prince Rudolf's Land, but here it was blockaded by ice floes, on which account the expedition decided to plant their tents and pass the winter at this spot. During this winter a sledge expedition was planned, but had to return to the camp after a fruitless errand, owing to the bad state of the ice, which made it perilous and well-nigh impossible to proceed further north. For six sunless months the expedition dwelt during the dark Arctic winter in these rude huts, seeing the vessel that was to reconduct them home slew to one side and hearing it crack and groan under the relentless pressure of the ice blocks. When the spring came at last a second sleigh expedition was organised under the command of Captain Cagin of the Royal Navy. The Duke, to his intense regret, could not join them, two of his fingers having been frozen during a reconnaissance made by him in the course of the winter. The sleigh expeditions were divided into three sections, of four men and six sleighs, to remain absent respectively twenty, forty, and sixty days. The second party returned to the camp in the appointed time, the third after 71 days, but of the first no news was ever more heard despite the constant and active searches carried on. It was the third party that attained to 0° 22″ further north than the northernmost point touched by Nansen, thus beating the record, but it had to turn back for lack of victuals, and this return it seems proved far more fatiguing even than the journey out, and in the end to keep body and soul together they had to kill and eat the faithful dogs who had carried them so far in safety.

In 1901 the whole of the expedition, excepting the vanished three, returned to Italy, bringing with them a large quantity of new material in flora and fauna, and most careful scientific calculations made during the polar campaign. It is said that the Prince, who was largely assisted in the fitting out of this expedition by the generosity of his uncle, King Humbert, contemplates a return to the Arctic regions for further study and research.

Medicine and Surgery.

In the science of medicine and surgery, in all purely laboratory work, Italy's repute stands high, and particularly in the matter of surgery, where again the skilful hand asserts itself. It is greatly to be deplored that the hygiene of the hospitals, and above all the nursing, is not up to the high level of the doctors' skill. Though often well equipped with instruments and operation rooms, in the matter of scrupulous cleanliness and scientific after-care of the patients a vast field of human activity still lies fallow. Though the days of Mrs. Gamp may be over, the science of nursing has not yet made headway in Italy. Nor is Italy as yet up to modern requirements in the matter of anaesthetics and pain-alleviators. Painless dentistry, for example, except such as is painless for the dentist, is as yet an unknown quantity.

But where the Peninsula is far ahead is in all that pertains to electricity, and especially in the matter of electric traction.

Electricity and Magnetism.

In this respect Italy's great riches in what has been called its "white coal" (water) stand it in good stead and have been utilized with knowledge and rare audacity. In Italy it is common to even find insignificant villages electrically lighted, telephones are in great use, both in and between towns, and are relatively inexpensive, while the electric railways with their smooth, swift, dustless working furnish examples of what in the future will be the common and more agreeable methods of progression.

In great part this is due to Antonio Pacinotti, professor at

the University of Pisa. Endowed with that rare modesty which is so often found in Italy coupled with really eminent capacity, he has never put himself forward, and only quite recently have his scientific merits been recognised in the shape of a seat in the Senate. Yet without his discovery of the magnetic ring applied to the electric dynamo whereby it is possible to combine alternating currents so that they can also be used to produce rotation, the application of electricity as a cheap and simple motor force would not have been possible. So excellent are Italian electric machines that the first turbines required to work the waters of Niagara were made in Milan. Indeed, at the last meeting of the British Association the Italian superiority in all matters pertaining to electricity was generally acknowledged, particularly in the domain of hydro-electricity. For the uses of industry and for public and private illumination Italy disposes of over two-and-a-half millions of horse-power. One of the most wonderful of these plants is that of Vizzola-Ticino, in Lombardy. The mass of water which enters into the turbines represents over 25,000 horse power force. And this whole complicated and difficult enterprise was begun and completed in less than a twelvemonth.

Now that the State has taken over the railways it has been decided that more trains shall be run by electricity, for the land is anxious to diminish the heavy coal bill it has to pay abroad, reckoned at about 150,000,000 francs annually.

Italian Electric Installations.

Dr. Silvanus Thompson, the President of the Electrical Society of London, put on record his opinion of Italian ability in this respect, when he stated that even after seeing the electric installation at Niagara or that of Rheinfelden or of Schaffhausen it will be seen on crossing the Alps and studying the Italian installations that Italy can show things on these lines not to be seen elsewhere. The Italians, he goes on to say, have struck out lines of their own in place of slavishly copying other nations,

have solved the problems that confronted them in their own way, and applied them with courage and ability.

In the domain of electricity Signor Pisiscelli Taggi has also distinguished himself with his invention of the Electric Post, which it is hoped may soon be universally applied. Four steel wires stretched on the top of iron poles some 15 or 20 metres in height form the supports upon which run the little waggons that carry the correspondence, and whose whirling speed attains some 400 kilometres an hour. The letter-boxes are placed at the base of the iron poles that are connected by electric lines with the central office. As soon as a letter is dropped into one of these boxes a little mechanism springs forward, pushing the letter under rollers that annul the postage stamp and impress upon the envelope the name of the city whence the letter departs, the date and hour of postage. Then as soon as the collecting vehicle arrives and stops at the extremity of the pole, the letter-box closes automatically and rises to the top of the pole, empties its contents into the little waggon, and returns to re-open for fresh contributions. Meanwhile the little waggon speeds on its path to empty yet other letter-boxes, and continues to act thus until it arrives at the central office where the correspondence is sorted and sent forward to its destination.

The Electric Post.

The same inventor has patented a machine that automatically stamps railway tickets, indicates the route to be covered, the price, the date, etc. It is called the Tessograph.

Of great importance and capable of vast developments is the discovery by which it is possible to use the same wires for telegraphing and telephoning. This is due to Professor Edmondo Bruni and Signor Carlo Turchi, both assistants at the Technical Institute of Ferrara. That it was possible to use the wires in this way is not entirely new. What is new and ingenious is the method invented by these men. The

The Telegraph and the Telephone.

advantage and economy hereby realized, especially in time of war or when exploring, are obvious.

Likely to prove of great importance and economy, too, in the wear and tear of ships is the recent invention of a young Florentine professor, Carlo del Lungo. He has built a machine that reduces the attrition between the water and the bulk of a vessel when in movement. This has already been tried with good results.

Indeed, in looking over the published lists of patents accorded one would be led to suppose that all Italians are busy inventing something and never happier than when so doing. And this applies to every class, not only to trained scientists. Thus, an employé in the little station of Senigallia in the Marches, Calidio Baglioni, has just invented an instrument of great importance, that will hinder those terrible accidents caused by the collision of trains. Thanks to this apparatus not only is the presence of a train moving in an opposite direction over the same set of rails signalled, but by an ingenious automatic contrivance both trains are brought to a standstill.

Important Railway Invention.

Yet another invention of great utility has been made by a workman in the railway works. It is called the oscillograph Pagnini, from the name of its inventor. Its purpose is to register graphically by means of diagrams, movements and impulses in a given sense. It consists of three pendulums attached to a writing pencil. The first pendulum registers transversal impulses, the second longitudinal, the third vertical. The whole apparatus is enclosed in a box that can easily be placed wherever desired. The practical purpose attained by this instrument is the measurement and calculation of the oscillations of a beam or a metal bridge during the passage of a heavy truck or other weight, the elasticity of a common or railway carriage, the gradients of a road, the time employed by a vehicle or a locomotive to traverse a given distance, and so forth.

It may surprise many readers to learn that in the department of inventing and making of instruments of precision for military purposes Italy stands head and shoulders above the rest of the world. The Italians were the first to recognise after the war of 1870 the supreme importance of mathematical accuracy in all artillery operations, and as early as 1885 invented for their own coast defences a Telemeter, which for years England tried hard to obtain, and for the secret of whose construction fabulous sums were offered. It is true that the inventors of Telemeters are legion, but only the Italian one is absolutely sure and exact.

Military Inventions.

The Officina Galileo in Florence, where the scientific outfits for the Italian Army and Navy are made as well as those of many other armies and navies of the world, is in its line an almost unique institution. The Japanese frankly admit that to this scientific workshop directly and indirectly they largely owe their success in humiliating Russia. Already in 1885 when looking out for the best that Europe could offer they turned to the Officina Galileo for help, and sent over officers to study and see the instruments that were there being made. And not only did they study them in theory but they executed them in practice, staying six full years as workmen in the place. When 302 Metre Hill was taken at Port Arthur, the hecatomb of lives that preceded its capture were sacrificed to the one aim of planting upon its summit a Stadiometer made in Florence, and when the place was thrown open to the war correspondents at the end of the siege, this instrument, that had enabled the Japanese to sink the Russian ships with deadly precision, was still found *in situ*. The Officina admits that they are now building even finer and more wonderful instruments, but of course these are State and military secrets.

Scientific Outfits.

Obviously it is not possible within very narrow limits and in a purely popular work to detail all that Italy has done

of recent years and is still doing in the domain of applied or theoretical Science. I must, therefore, content myself with mentioning but one more invention, this, however, one of the most interesting discoveries that has been made for many years past. As all astronomers know, many physicians have long been endeavouring to invent a so-called liquid lens.

The Colzi Helioscope.

It is a mere priest of Perugia, Padre Agostino Colzi, who has solved this apparently insoluble problem. To him is due a telescopic eye-piece for studying the sun. The construction of the Colzi Helioscope is based on the principle of light-absorption between transparent substances (both liquid and solid) of varying densities. In the instrument a total reflecting prism of glass is cemented to a prism-shaped cell containing a liquid of nearly the same refractive index, thus insuring sufficient light-absorption to admit of the sun's image being received without the intervention of a dark shade.

Rapid, and hence inadequate, though this bird's-eye survey must needs be, I trust enough has been said to demonstrate the modern Italian's fertility and ingenuity of invention and his scientific pre-eminence in certain departments.

CHAPTER VIII

PHILOSOPHY

In the domains of philosophy, sociology, psychology, biology, and anthropology, Italy is specially prominent, and in all these departments the activity of the cultivators evinces a practical rather than a theoretical bias. Hence results of these studies prove useful in the spheres of daily life. And this despite the fact that with the late revival of Idealism, a small section of the community has shown an interest in Theosophy and analogous occult sciences.

Italian Studies Practical.

But idealism in Italy, owing to the native genius of the people, permits of a positive and realist strain, and hence metaphysics find scant favour among the followers of philosophic science. The younger generation inclines rather to the eminently sane and practical modern theory of Pragmatism or to the doctrines of Nietzsche. They have learnt the charitable moderation that makes them say with Zarathustua—"Enemy," ye shall say, but not "wicked one"; "diseased one" ye shall say, but not "wretch"; "fool" ye shall say, but not "sinner."

Theory of Pragmatism.

If I were asked to name in what particular Italy stands to-day quite head and shoulders above her fellows, I should unhesitatingly say in the science of criminal anthropology. This is an essentially Italian study, originating as early as 1320, when the King of the Two Sicilies decreed that no one should be permitted to practise medicine who had not studied anatomy for at least one year. After this, in the fourteenth century, we find men who devoted themselves to the study of skulls, thus laying the basis of the science of craniology. It was

Criminal Anthropology.

Italians, therefore, who initiated this science, and to Italy has been reserved the proud place of bringing it to its high development in the nineteenth century, even though the discoveries of Darwin, which gave it a fresh impetus, date from England. Beyond question, the Peninsula is at the head and front of all studies connected with criminal anthropology, and not of criminal anthropology only, but of all cognate sciences connected with crime and the criminal.

To the Italians belongs the merit of reviving the study of a question with which philosophy, law, and medicine have always been occupied. It has been well remarked that whenever philosophical studies have free expansion, that whenever the desire to safeguard society, the spirit of toleration, the methods of ameliorating the fate of the guilty, have been studied by thinkers, their conceptions have eventually conquered public opinion. It is to the glory of Italy, the land where Roman law, the foundation of modern law, was born, that it has again put into the crucible this problem of criminality, and that it has proceeded to the study of this problem by the only true scientific method—namely, that of studying the psychology of criminals and their pathological abnormities. It will be its distinction to have declared against illusory enthusiasms, and to have founded a science which will contribute to the more efficacious protection of society.

Prof. Cesare Lombroso.

The recognised chief of this Italian school is Prof. Cesare Lombroso, of Turin, who has illustrated his theories by a number of remarkably able and interesting books. Until quite recently, to the world at large, the criminal figured as of the Bill Sykes type—and who, reading Oliver Twist, has not shrunk with horror on perusing the intimate drama of the ruffian's mind after the brutal murder of the faithful Nancy? These things move us as the highest efforts of Dickens's imagination. But Bill Sykes was written in pre-scientific days. It is instructive to turn from him, and the class of melodramatic ruffians of whom he is but an example, to the criminals

dispassionately laid bare in mental, moral, and physical dissection by Lombroso and his fellow-workers. Certainly no such type as Bill Sykes, a projected image of the novelist's brain, coinciding with a highly-strung nervous system, is to be found in the gallery of habitual malefactors presented to us in the " Uomo Delinquente " and other books. Habitual malefactors, according to Italian students, are a class apart from other men, a distinct species of " genus homo sapiens " ; they must be judged by special standards, and must by no means be informed with the feelings of normal men. Herein consists the fundamental basis of the new science of criminal anthropology—a science which bids fair, in spite of conservative and clerical opposition, and even of ignorant ridicule, to modify profoundly our present manner of considering and treating these enemies and pests of society.

View of Signor Sergi.

" Criminal anthropology," says Signor Sergi, one of the ablest exponents of the new system, " studies the delinquent in his natural place—that is to say, in the field of biology and pathology. But it does not for that reason put him outside the society in which his criminal manifestations occur, for it considers human society as a natural biological fact, outside of which man does not and cannot live. As normal anthropology, like other biological sciences, studies and observes the individual in his natural *milieu*, and finds that this *milieu* is double, physical and organic, and under this double aspect sees him develop and act, so criminal anthropology does the same with the very limited and specialized aim of discovering the nature and origin of the phenomenon of crime. Every phenomenon, however, remains inexplicable if it be examined alone ; the explanation is easier if it be studied in the complex of phenomena developed in the double physical and social *milieu* of which we have spoken."

Words such as these, where we find embryology, physiology, anatomy, chemistry, and statistics, invoked as aids to the origin of crime, place us at the antipodes of ancient

philosophies; yet Lombroso and his school are in reality acting on the old-world notion embodied by Horace in his "Mens Sana in Corpore Sano." The delinquent, they argue, acts abnormally. Acts being the visible results of functions performed by the brain and reflective nervous system, it follows that these functions are abnormal. The functions being abnormal, the organs which perform them must be either abnormal or troubled in their action by the habitual or accidental interference of disturbing causes, for no normal organ acting under normal conditions can perform abnormal functions. The founders of this new school, therefore, dedicate themselves first of all to the study of the skull, brain, and nervous system of the criminals; then make careful observations not only on other parts of the skeleton but on the living body; the height, length, and proportion of the members, the total or partial development of each part; the weight of the body, its muscular development, the deeper-seated organs, such as the heart, liver, kidneys, intestines; the various functions which may directly or indirectly affect those of the brain, such as the circulation of the blood, digestion, and the disturbances which show themselves there, and in consequence of the general state of the organism as regards the balance of the vital functions; sleep, sexual manifestations, normal or abnormal muscular force, and other factors besides. Everything indeed which concerns the morphology of the criminal is passed through the sieve of the severest scrutiny. This scrutiny reveals, as might be expected, various irregularities. The skull, for instance, presents anomalies of shape and size, being in a large percentage of cases abnormally small; anomalies indicative of regression and of arrested development; anomalies in the position, shape, and closing of the sutures, "the doorways of the head" being invariably closed too early. Morphological irregularities are also found in the bones of the face, notably in those of the nose and lower jaw. The brain itself, say the investigators, shows unmistakable signs of a

Methods of Study.

degraded form, in the number and distribution of the cerebral convolutions, in the entire atrophy of some parts, in the extraordinary development of others. The shape and structure of the skull and brain, says Lombroso, connect criminals very closely with primitive man, and even with his animal ancestors. Criminals must be regarded either as forms belated in the race of development, or as physical and therefore also moral degradations—unavoidable, regrettable products of our civilization. In either case they form a distinct species, in need of scientific investigation.

The action of the brain is, however, not only modified by its form and development, but also, in a very large number of cases, by pathological occurrences. Traces of old wounds, "some head blow not heeded in his youth," said Sir Kay of King Arthur's self-hæmorrhages, affections of the investing membrane and of the blood-vessels are seldom wanting. In other words, the organ that controls and originates actions is in a morbid state. Further, the slight irregularities constantly verified in the branchings of the blood-vessels in the heart, liver, and other viscera cannot but conspire, by the abnormal functionings they occasion, toward the production of physiologically irregular organisms.

Intimately connected with the physical conditions of the criminal are his psychic peculiarities. These consist chiefly in great instability of character, coupled with overwhelming development of some passion and the atrophy of some others. The criminal acts from impulse, although he often displays, as madmen do, a low cunning in finding means to carry out his impulse. He is intensely vain, priding himself on the number of crimes he has committed. He is, further, devoid of all remorse, fond of boasting of his evil deeds and of describing them in detail. Thus, Lombroso gives the reproduction of a photograph, in which three murderers who had assassinated one of their number caused themselves to be represented in the

Criminal Character.

very act of committing their deadly deed, a photograph taken for the benefit of their less fortunate associates.

This inordinate vanity is often in itself the primary cause of terrible crimes, especially in young men who have just attained puberty, an age observed to be especially fruitful in crimes of violence. The critical character of this period, even in well-balanced minds, is abundantly known; little wonder, then, if it prove fatal to those whose constitutions urge them to extremes. It is noticed also that the criminal needs to lead a life full of noise. The necessity of orgies entailed by the irregularities of his feelings is often the moving cause of some act of violence, such as robbery and assassination, calculated to procure the means of indulgence. His affections, too, are abnormal: he will assassinate father and mother, and yet be capable of making sacrifices for some companion in time of illness. This trait, however, occurs more often among women than men. We used to believe there was a species of honour among thieves, but Lombroso asserts that it is rare to find any consistent attempt to shield each other; on the contrary, the almost physical need they feel of talking incessantly renders them specially inclined to mutual betrayal. The criminal is fond of tattooing himself, and so distinctive a mark of criminal tendencies is this held in Italy that tattooed recruits are looked on as likely to make bad soldiers; and a private once spoke to Lombroso of tattooing as "convict habits." He presents, too, an extraordinary insensibility to pain, tattooing himself in places which even the Indians spare, and receiving or inflicting on himself the most terrible wounds without a murmur.

Habits of Criminals.

He has a language of his own, employed even in cases where he would run no risk from using ordinary speech, and this still further isolates him from the rest of mankind. He has a writing of his own, too, made up of hieroglyphics and rough pictures.

Such, briefly, is the Frankenstein, which the modern science

of criminal anthropology evokes; an unbalanced being, a pathological subject, whose illness takes a form which, hurtful to society, is defined as crime. For the facts collected by Lombroso place beyond all doubt the intimate connection which has so long been suspected to exist between crime and mental derangement. Madmen and criminals belong to the same family; not in the sense of the vulgar and unthinking expression that all criminals are mad, though every-day experience in the police courts puts it beyond doubt that many are actually deranged, but in the sense that both classes are in a similar pathological state, which manifests itself on the one hand in lunacy, on the other in crime. This position is rendered still stronger by the revelations of genealogical statistics, which reveal the heredity through long generations of criminal tendencies, as they do of insanity, and alternations of criminals and madmen, in the same or successive generations.

Connection between Crime and Mental Derangement.

Lombroso divides criminals into two great classes, the original or born delinquent, and the fortuitous offender, a man who becomes criminal through outward influences.

Classes of Criminals.

The first, the synthesis of every degeneration, the outcome of all biological deterioration, commits crimes against society by virtue of a morbid process passing from one generation to another, derived from cerebral and other physiological conditions. In him the impulse of passion is not sullen or isolated, but associates itself almost always with reflection. The second, on the contrary, the criminal of passion and impetus, acts at a given moment in consequence of an overwhelming stimulus, say, a sudden access of jealousy. The two classes frequently merge into each other, for the mere fact that a man, suddenly, without reflection, by a reflex act, as it were, stabs his offender or his unfaithful wife, proves that he is not normal. The want of reflection constitutes an extenuating circumstance before judge or jury, but before

pathological psychology, says Signor Sergi, "it constitutes an accusation."

The importance of the distinction is seen in the views taken on criminal jurisprudence by Lombroso and his school. It is generally said that to act logically in face of these views we should have to make extensive use of capital punishment. The most hasty perusal of Lombroso's books will show that this is not his view of the case. He lays immense stress on prevention, for even the morbid process may, he asserts, be modified in the very young, just as a disease, taken in time, may be cured, but, neglected, becomes chronic,

He examines carefully the means adopted in various countries for refining the minds of children, and speaks warmly of English ragged schools. Juvenile refinement, strict but judicious control, education in the highest sense of the word—these must be, he argues, the primary object of every nation which aims at decreasing its criminality. He also advocates an association between various nations for the hunting of criminals, and for making such observations on their lives and habits as shall lead to their easier classification. In reformatories he has small belief; statistics show that they in no way decrease the percentage of recidivists; the fact of recidivism shows the habitual criminal, and here no punishment will suffice. The man must be treated as though afflicted with a serious illness and removed from society, for which, however, he may and should be made to work.

Means of Prevention.

He insists that these questions are of vital importance to every nation, and asserts repeatedly that teachers in ragged schools and founders of polytechnics are patriots and philanthropists in the highest sense of the words, because helping to stamp out crime more than all the long-term sentences in the world.

Crime is at once a biological and a social phenomenon. The criminal is a microbe which only flourishes on suitable

soil. Without doubt it is the environment which makes the criminal, but, like the cultivation medium, without the microbe it is powerless to germinate the crime. To use Professor Ferri's expression, up to recent times the criminal has been regarded as a sort of algebraical formula; the punishment has been proportioned not to the criminal but to the crime. Anthropologists are teaching us to strive after scientific justice. Time and events have brought into clear relief the inadequacy of legal maxims, founded on antiquated and unscientific conceptions, and thus modern Italians show us that not the nature of the crime but the dangerousness of the offender constitutes the only reasonable legal criterion to guide the inevitable social reaction against the criminal. This position is the legitimate outcome of the scientific study of the criminal. And where the man of science has led the way the man of law must follow.

Punishment of the Criminal.

Such, in brief and somewhat in the rough, are the conclusions of Italian criminal anthropology, which I have given at some length, as the subject is too vast as well as too new to be clearly comprehensible in a few words. In the autumn of 1896 an International Congress of Criminal Anthropologists was held at Geneva, and on this occasion the Italian school triumphed as never before over all adversaries and schismatics, and especially over their French colleagues, who had carried their antagonism to things Italian even to the serene fields of science. The French objections were beaten down by a very hailstorm of facts, so carefully collated, so industriously collected, that opposition was perforce silenced.

International Congress of Criminal Anthropologists.

In the front ranks of the combatants, indeed, leading the attack, was that eminent criminal sociologist, Enrico Ferri, whose legal vocations have not hindered him from continuing his favourite studies, though he is no less valiant as a lawyer than as a scientist. Indeed, he holds that the two studies ought to go

Views of Enrico Ferri.

hand in hand. All lawyers, he affirms, should dedicate themselves to the study of criminal anthropology if they would go to the fountain-head of human responsibility; all judges should be inspired by this doctrine, ere blindly punishing a culprit on the faith of a code not always founded on direct observation of the environment or of the individual. "It is not true that with Lombroso's theories all prison doors would be broken down and respectable humanity given over to the mercy of delinquents, as our opponents say. And were the first part of this strange paradox to be verified, *i.e.*, that which demands that in order to be logical all prison doors be opened—there would open also those of the lunatic asylums in order to permit the entry of the men ejected from the prisons, individuals whose mental and physical constitutions pushed them into crime." It was just this theory of the *born* criminal, which Lombroso was the first irrefutably to prove, and whose effects must shortly be felt in criminal legislation, that carried off the most clamorous victory at Geneva.

Career of Cesare Lombroso.

Cesare Lombroso, who is a Jew by birth, was born at Turin, in 1836. As a mere lad he loved to write, and composed, with the same facility and rapidity that distinguishes him to this day, novels, poems, tragedies, treatises on archæological, physiological, and already on sociological subjects, those dating from his student days being actually published, so much talent did they show. Medicine was the study to which he devoted himself, and his first independent researches were directed to examining into the causes that produce the idiocy and pellagra which are, unfortunately, so widespread in Lombardy and Liguria. His treatise on this theme attracted the attention of no less a person than Professor Virchow. After fighting for the independence of Italy in 1859, he was appointed professor of psychiatry at Pavia, where he founded a psychiatric museum. From Pavia he passed to Pesaro, as director of the Government mad-house, and thence to Turin as professor of forensic medicine, a position he still

retains. It was in his native Turin that he began those original studies destined to make his name famous over all the globe. Endowed by nature with a strong intelligence, a robust will, and a keen intellectual curiosity, he was indifferent to the incredulous smile, the sarcasms, that greeted his first efforts at solving problems hitherto held insoluble. Very bitter, very hard were his struggles—how hard only those can appreciate who have talked with Lombroso in intimacy and have noted the pained scorn with which he speaks of his adversaries—adversaries some of whom are not silenced to this hour. But his science, his studies conquered, which if not always complete yet are always serious, wherefore criminal anthropology, a mere infant some thirty years ago, may to-day be said to be adult; a raw empiric but a while ago, to-day a science, young if you will, but vital and destined to overturn the facile, fantastic monuments erected by so many penalists.

The Works of Lombroso.

The work with which Lombroso will go down to posterity is a huge book, huge in every sense of the word, in which criminal man is studied on a scientific basis. We refer to the "Uomo Delinquente," of which its author has published a revised and enlarged edition, wrestling with new facts, new observations, and new deductions. It is dedicated to Max Nordau, the author of that noted book, "Degeneration," who had in his turn dedicated his work to his master, Cesare Lombroso.

The dedication reads thus: "To you I have wished to dedicate this volume with which I close my studies on human degeneration, as to the most sincere friend I have found in the sad course of my scientific life, and as to the one who has wrested fecund fruits from the new doctrines I have attempted to introduce into the scientific world."

Needless to say that Lombroso is the very first person to admit that in the almost virgin field of criminal anthropology there is still much to do, and that Science has not yet spoken her last word; but it is his magic wand that has indicated the horizon and has swept over vast new areas, often with

lightning rapidity and intuition. Thus, the base of the new edifice was laid, and the rest of the monument rose up rapidly around it, notwithstanding its occasional faultiness, pointed out eagerly by adverse scientists, criticisms that could not shake down the edifice, for its base was too solid and strong. Gradually a few apostles of the new science gathered around Lombroso, and the little compact mass moved from success to success.

Another of Lombroso's books which aroused much discussion and which may almost be said to have founded yet another school, if we may so designate the group devoted to the study of another branch of anthropology, was "Genio o Follia" (Genius or Madness?), which largely helped to make its author's name known even outside of strictly scientific circles. This work enchanted all thinkers, psychiatrists, doctors, indeed, all men who dedicate themselves to the search for signs of madness in the lives and works of eminent authors and artists. For Lombroso had striven in this book to prove scientifically how closely genius and madness are allied. As was the case with "Criminal Man," so here, too, the master's disciples strayed from the paths laid down by the pioneer, exaggerated his conclusions and carried them to absurd excesses. Lombroso had at last to raise his voice against the extravagances into which he was dragged. Besides various absurdities, there were published some careful, serious studies having for their themes the lives of Napoleon I, Leopardi, Ugo Foscolo, and Byron, in which it was made to appear that these men were all victims of heredity, and neither their virtues nor their vices were their own—studies of some interest, academically considered, but of no tangible utility, and which did not add or detract one iota from the merits or demerits of their subjects. Against this method of dealing with men of genius as pathological subjects Mantegazza very rightly upraised his voice in the name of art, tradition, and history.

Space does not permit of naming Lombroso's varied and

voluminous writings, which are enumerated in every biographical dictionary. "La Donna Delinquente" (The Criminal Woman), written in collaboration with G. Ferrero, one of the most promising of the younger criminal anthropologists, of which an incomplete and inadequate translation appeared in England, aroused a storm of discussion on its publication, and was especially attacked by the adherents of the old methods. He has since published "The Anarchists," in which he also takes unusual views with regard to these latter-day society pests—pests for which society itself, as nowadays conditioned, he holds to be alone responsible—and "Crime as a Society Function," which has aroused the fury of the clerical and moderate factions in Italy.

His Varied Writings.

Chips from the workshop of his extraordinarily prolific brain, ever evolving new ideas, new points of view, he scatters in the many articles he loves to write for English and American periodicals, but his most important scientific communications he reserves for the *Archivio di Psichiatria*, which he edits together with Ferri and Garofolo. His work is by no means perfect: he is apt to jump too rapidly at conclusions, to accept data too lightly; thus he was led at the beginning to overestimate the atavistic element in the criminal, and at a later date he has pressed too strongly the epileptic affinities of crime. Still, when all is said and done, his work is undoubtedly epoch-making, and he has opened up valuable new lines of investigation and suggested others.

I said that Lombroso's first studies were directed to the pellagra, that strange and terrible disease which annually mows down such a vast number of victims in the fair land of Northern Italy, and which is a luminous proof of the grave financial condition of the labourers in some of the most beautiful and wealthy regions of the world. Concerning this terrible illness, which densely populates Italian mad-houses, all students of natural science have long been gravely occupied. For the

The Pellagra.

terrible increase in lunacy noted by Italian statistics in the last years the pellagra is largely responsible.

Psychiatry, which has abandoned the old methods in Italy, is no longer a jailer employing the methods of an inquisitor, but a science that seeks for ultimate causes and remedies, and, in alliance with economic and political science, endeavours to restore to society a large contingent of workers which would otherwise be destroyed by disease.

Enrico Morselli.

Especially active in this department is Enrico Morselli. Psychologist, anthropologist, psychiatrist, philosopher, and literary man—Morselli has right to all these titles, and in each branch he is noteworthy. As a mere student he attracted attention by disputing the conclusions of a noted celebrity on some anthropological points, proving himself right. When only twenty-eight he was called to preside over the Turin Lunatic Asylum, and soon distinguished himself by his profound knowledge of everything connected with the study and treatment of the demented. Besides attending to his profession he found time to write a number of works dealing with normal and abnormal mental maladies, whose mere enumeration would fill pages, some of which, like his work on Suicide, have been translated into English. One of Morselli's works was a reply to Brunetière's assertions regarding "the bankruptcy of science," demonstrating that here was a case in which the wish was father to the thought, and for which no real foundation existed.

The Father of Italian Anthropology.

Paolo Mantegazza, the founder of the National Museum of Anthropology, of world-wide fame, has been rather left behind in the rapid onward tramp of his younger colleagues. Mantegazza is perhaps entitled to lay claim to the name he loves to sport, that of the "father of Italian anthropology;" but, according to the more precise views of our day, he can hardly be regarded as a real scientist. As is often the case, the sons have out-stripped the father,

who now combats the views of his legitimate offspring. A reproach cast at Mantegazza, it would seem not without reason, is that he too closely follows Molière's precept, "*Je prends mon bien où je le trouve*," and that he has passed off as his own the conclusions and the work of German scientific men. Another reproach that is certainly well founded is his manifest delight in handling obscene themes, and handling them not in the calm, scientific spirit that removes from them a real obscene character, but treating the details with a gusto that reveals how these prurient matters rather delight than disgust him, and what is worse, these works are written in popular language, frankly appealing to a popular rather than a scientific audience. To this class belong all his works on Love, on Women, on the Art of Taking a Wife, of Being a Husband, etc. It may safely be asserted that his fame is steadily declining, and that his want of perseverance and observation is itself to blame for this. By nature Mantegazza was endowed with a fine and versatile intelligence, but he has lowered it in the search after cash and easy success. This handsome old man, with the face and smile of a satyr, is a familiar figure in the streets of Florence.

The number of men in contemporary Italy who are strict anthropologists without being sociologists is extraordinarily great, and there is none of them who has not done good and original work. Limits of space oblige me perforce to pass them by, in order to speak of yet others of the new school created by Lombroso's theories, and who take rank in the files of criminal anthropology, a science far more interesting to the general reader than that which deals with biology pure and simple. To this section in the first rank belong the alienists, besides a large number of lawyers, judges, and journalists. The highest position among them belongs indubitably to Enrico Ferri. His verdict, like that of Cesare Lombroso, is constantly appealed to in complicated criminal cases where the sanity of the person or his natural proclivity to crime is in question. A man of really unusual physical

beauty is Enrico Ferri, as well as of charm of manner and of eloquence which, when stirred to a theme dear to his heart, carries all before it. Enrico Ferri was born in 1856, in the neighbourhood of Mantua, a city whose very name in Austrian days was synonymous with cruel despotism, for this and Spielburg were the favourite fortresses of the German persecutors. At a tender age he lost his father, and his mother, left in straitened circumstances, had a hard struggle to give her only child an adequate education. Already at the University Ferri distinguished himself, publishing a thesis which dealt with criminal law. When Lombroso published his great work on Criminal Man, Ferri was at once attracted by its scientific nature and sought to become acquainted with its author. Since then they have been fast friends as well as co-workers. In 1881 he was called to fill the chair of penal law at the University of Bologna. His opening discourse dealt with the theme which was to prove the first draft of his great work, Criminal Sociology, a work which has been translated into many European tongues. The lecture was entitled "New Horizons in Penal Law."

The Work of Enrico Ferri.

He says: "It was in this inaugural discourse that I affirmed the existence of the positivist school of criminal law, and assigned to it these two fundamental rules: 1. While the classical schools of criminal law have always studied the crime and neglected the criminal, the object of the positivist school was, in the first place, to study the criminal, so that, instead of the crime being regarded merely as a juridical fact, it must be studied with the aid of biology, of psychology, and of criminal statistics as a natural and social fact, transforming the old criminal law into a criminal sociology. 2. While the classical schools, since Beccaria and Howard, have fulfilled the historic mission of decreasing the punishments, as a reaction from the severity of the mediæval laws, the object

The Positivist School of Criminal Law.

Photo by *Giacomo Brogi, Florence*

ENRICO FERRI

of the positivist school is to decrease the offence by investigating its natural and social causes in order to apply social remedies more efficacious and more humane than the penal counteraction, always slow in its effects, especially in its cellular system, which I have called one of the aberrations of the nineteenth century."

Ferri has occupied himself less with the instinctive than with the occasional criminal, and his clear and philosophic spirit has placed him at the head of criminal sociologists. Elected to Parliament even before the age of thirty, previous to which he could not take his place, according to Italian law, he began as an avowed Liberal, but soon passed over to the ranks of scientific socialists, whose acknowledged leader he has since become. He also holds the post of professor of penal law. His most important work has Homicide as its theme. It may truly be called a monumental book, for it covers a thousand closely-printed pages.

His Book on Homicide.

Crime is a decided condition. This is the final and lucid outcome of this learned work, a conclusion at which Virgil and Lombroso independently arrived, and a conclusion that honours these thinkers. And crime is not a normal phenomenon. Its existence only helps to confirm the innate relations that exist between economic conditions and criminal facts, or rather in Ferri's own words, " that the present social crisis has reached such a point as to render even criminal symptoms acute and profound, which does not exclude that in a more advanced phase of social order, such as scientific socialists look forward to, crime, like every other symptom of social pathology, will be reduced to the smallest proportions, such as occurs to common illnesses on the cessation of a more or less prolonged epidemic."

This book Ferri dedicated to his little three-year-old son, expressing the hope in his dedication, that when he is old enough to understand it, Italy may show fewer signs of moral pathology. Though in some points he has grown to differ

from him, Ferri continues to venerate his master, Lombroso, and with rare eloquence defends his theories from attacks at moments when the less eloquent scientist seems silenced by the arguments of his adversaries.

It is noteworthy and also significant that almost all thoughtful Italians who have dedicated themselves to the studies of anthropology in general and criminal anthropology in particular are Socialists in politics. Assiduous, dispassionate observation of mankind would seem to have brought them to this conclusion. A leader in the Italian Parliament in this sense, as well as a gifted criminal anthropologist, is Napoleone Colajanni, by original profession a doctor, but now too absorbed in his political duties to practise. Colajanni is by birth a Sicilian, and has much of the quick, fiery temperament of these islanders, in whose veins the blood courses hotly. A facile orator, his speeches always command attention in Parliament, while his rigid, incorruptible honesty makes him esteemed in a *milieu* of unscrupulous politicians and wire-pullers. As philanthropist, as politician, he was early attracted to study the problems of misery and crime, whence resulted his great work on Criminal Sociology. Like Ferri and all the other thoughtful students of the criminal, he has seen the direct bearing on criminality of what he himself well calls "social hygiene." He points out how we may neglect the problems of social organization, but must do so at our peril. In many respects he is opposed to Lombroso. He holds, for example, that Lombroso has too much accentuated the atavistic element in the criminal. He agrees with those who deem that of a great number of modern habitual criminals it may be said that they have the misfortune to live in an age when their merits are not appreciated. Had they lived in the world a sufficient number of generations ago, the strongest of them might have been chiefs of a tribe. As Colajanni has said: "How many of Homer's heroes would to-day be in

Criminal Anthropologists and Socialism.

Colajanni's Views.

convict prisons or at all events despised as unjust and violent!" He has strenuously combated Lombroso's indiscriminate method of collecting facts, and compares it to Charles IX's famous order on St. Bartholomew's Eve: "Kill them all! God will know his own."

The Position of Garofolo.

A word must be said concerning Garofolo, the Neapolitan lawyer, who, accepting generally the conclusions reached by Lombroso and Ferri, has become the most distinguished jurist of the moment, the pioneer of the reform of law through the method of natural science. His Criminology is marked by luminous suggestions of wise reform. Like Morselli, Garofolo does not blindly follow where his compeers lead. His volume entitled "Socialistic Superstitions" excited much wrath and astonishment in socialistic and anthropological camps, and was severely combated, especially by Ferri, who wrote a pamphlet on purpose to confute the publication. R. Garofolo was born in Naples, in 1852, of an old patrician family, hence perhaps by atavism he is debarred from being a Socialist. He holds the position of professor of law and penal procedure in his native city, and was intrusted by the Government in 1892 to draw up a scheme for the revision of the penal code. Garofolo has occupied himself chiefly, nay, entirely, with the legal side of criminal anthropology, and his great work Criminology deals with the means of repressing crime quite as much as with its nature and causes. He has also studied the question of what reparation is due to victims of crime. His only flight into sociology has concerned his attack on Socialism, in the curative Utopia of which he does not believe.

Scipio Sighele.

Other notable followers of this fascinating science who must not be overlooked are: Scipio Sighele, Guglielmo Ferrero, and A. G. Bianchi. All three are journalists, all three distinguished by the same qualities of keen observation, of more than ordinary cultivation, with sometimes a tendency to write a little hastily and to jump to conclusions too rapidly.

This reproof especially concerns Sighele, who has allowed himself to judge and write of matters English and American of which he has but a superficial and second-hand knowledge. Here the newspaper writer has done wrong to the scientist. Sighele made his name with an admirable book entitled "The Criminal Crowd," which a French writer has thought fit to appropriate in outline and almost entirely in substance, obtaining for it the honour of translation into English, while the real author has been left out in the cold. Able, too, is "The Criminal Couple." A paradoxical pamphlet directed against parliamentary government, and revealing the failure of a system on which the hopes of Europe were once based as the sheet-anchor of liberty, excited some attention on its appearance in 1895, and was dealt with at length in *Blackwood's Magazine*. One of his latest works on Individual Morality as opposed to Public Morality, inspired by the doubtful morality of Signor Crispi's Government, also aroused discussion.

Guglielmo Ferrero.

Guglielmo Ferrero is a Piedmontese, and belongs to an old aristocratic family of Turin. Together with Lombroso he wrote a book on Criminal Woman which at once brought him to the front. His first independent work was a remarkable one dealing with "Symbols." Since then he has written essays dealing with "Young Europe," and has now turned his attention to history, as I noted in the Literature chapter. Ferrero, too, is a convinced Socialist, and on this account was arrested during the reign of terror that prevailed in the course of the last months of Crispi's dictatorship. He was ordered to leave Italy, and, profiting by this enforced exile, he visited Germany and learned the language and the condition of anthropological studies in that land.

A. G. Bianchi is a Milanese by birth. Not rich, like Ferrero, he had to make his own way, and entered into journalism as a means to obtain daily bread. He began life as a railway official, writing at the same time reviews

of new books, Italian and foreign. Together with a colleague he founded a paper called *La Cronica Rossa*, and it was in these pages that he began to occupy himself with scientific literature, and to prove himself an enthusiastic follower of Lombroso. He entered the best Italian newspaper, *Corriere della Sera*, as its legal editor, and thus became even more enamoured of criminal anthropology. Intelligent, industrious, studious, he dedicated himself to the new science with ardour, and in a short time became allied to Lombroso and Morselli, who both applauded his zeal and his methods of working. Together with Sighele he issued a publication on Criminal Anthropology, richly illustrated with pictures, diagrams, and statistics, which met with favour even outside of strictly scientific circles.

A. G. Bianchi.

A remarkable book published by him is the "Romance of a Born Criminal," the autobiography of a convict, founded on authentic papers committed to his hands by the eminent psychiatrist, Silvio Venturi, director of the lunatic asylum at Catanzaro, a book which was translated immediately on its appearance into German, but which no English publisher has had the courage to issue, though it states at once in its preface that its scope is purely scientific, and that the word "Romance" is employed in a subjective sense. This piece of pathological literature throws a lurid light upon the inner nature of the criminal. Bianchi has written a long and careful preface, in which he points out just how and why this human document has scientific value. Bianchi has not had time to write many books, but his careful, studious articles are all of value, and denote his knowledge, intuition, and observation.

A Remarkable Book.

Limits of space oblige me to leave unmentioned yet other valiant followers of criminal anthropology in Italy, but I hope I have said enough to prove that this science has in the Peninsula both numerous and able adherents, and that Italy is justified in considering herself at the head and front of studies of this nature—a position which, indeed, few dispute

to her. Seeing how useful is this science as an auxiliary to the right study of history, literature, and political economy, it would be well if its propagation were more encouraged at Universities, in place of philosophy and metaphysics, which, when untouched by this new breath, have become fossilized and are as arid as they are sterile.

CHAPTER IX

AGRARIAN ITALY

IN speaking of Italy every writer, however modern, still repeats the saying of Virgil, "Magna parens frugum," and insists that Italy is essentially an agricultural country. This is one of those long established prejudices which, true in the past, have lost their accuracy in the present, that it is so hard to eradicate from the popular mind. Beyond question the last census of 1901 seems to confirm this dictum, because it notifies nine-and-a-half million persons engaged in agriculture and only four million workmen occupied in industrial pursuits. Italy is, however, fast becoming an industrial country, as can be deduced from many indications, and this despite the fact that the land is devoid of the primary materials and of the combustibles requisite in modern industry, though the latter deficiency is being rapidly substituted by great electric machines put into motion by the copious streams of water that flow down from all the mountain sides. Indeed, Italy's "white coal," as it is termed, is becoming a most important factor in her development and is rapidly supplanting the need for the fossil variety.

Italy mainly an Agricultural Country.

However, this transformation into an industrial country does not interfere with the fact that the great, rare and varied favours bestowed by nature upon Italy permit it to be an agricultural country *par excellence*. It can cultivate flowers and oranges in the southern provinces, on the Riviera it boasts a climate adapted to every species of plant that shuns the winter cold, in the uplands it owns rich pastures, in the centre it possesses a temperate zone that allows the lucrative culture of the olive tree, and finally it owns mountains where the chestnut flourishes.

Its Natural Resources.

To all this, however, there are unfortunately some drawbacks, though most of these are due to the hand of Mars and to generations of bad government. Thus, like Ireland, the land has suffered from that disastrous system of handing over estates to stewards who frequently proved untrustworthy, and also from absenteeism, a malpractice rampant already in the days of Augustus and against which Virgil's Georgics were written to protest.

Some Drawbacks.

Further, and this is a grave point, the mountains have been too much denuded of the forests that formerly clothed them. One of the first things a traveller notices is the bare appearance of the Apennines, for hundreds of miles lifting their naked peaks into the blue. Very beautiful they are when seen from a distance, especially when clothed in all the magic colouring of aerial tints at the moment of sunset. But a nearer approach shows them to be entirely denuded of timber, with their flanks deeply gashed by torrents and crumbling under the winter rains into a loose débris of stones and mud, mere wrecks of what they were when covered with the luxuriant forests for which Italy was celebrated in classical times. The northern sentiment for trees does not exist in the south, and the old classic feeling of reverence for the wood nymphs is dead and gone. The Dryads have fled for ever. Such trees as are seen are preserved for the sake of their fruits, for example, the oak woods of Umbria, which feed the numerous herds of pigs of that district with acorns. There are also large tracts of coppice-wood, which is cut in successive strips every ten or fifteen years and thus gives a regular income to the proprietor; but the growth of large timber trees is not encouraged, as the profit upon them is too remote. The necessities of the Italian landowner make him look to every centime, and the poverty of the peasant may serve as his excuse for so mercilessly lopping and

Mountains Denuded of Trees.

topping every tree to make faggots for the fire and to feed the cattle with foliage. Even the long lines of poplar trees which mark the course of many of the rivers are thus treated, until they assume the appearance of gigantic broomsticks.

Causes of the Destruction of Trees.

The charcoal-burner also penetrates ever further and further into the most inaccessible spots in the pursuit of his destructive trade, and even where carriage roads do not exist, for the sacks of light charcoal can be transported on mule-back over the mountain paths. Another cause of the destruction of woods has recently been added in the shape of mills which manufacture coarse paper out of wood pulp. Wherever a paper-mill is established it devours an ever-increasing circle of the woods around. And the natural growth of young trees to replace the old is often prevented by the flocks of goats and sheep that everywhere roam unchecked over the higher mountains. For, next to man, the greatest enemies of the trees are the goats and sheep. When a wood has been cut down, if these animals have access to the spot, not a sapling can escape their poisonous teeth. The seeds in the ground are soon exhausted, the old stumps and roots decay, and the loosened soil is washed away by the torrential rains, the ground crumbles, landslips take place, and a ruinous slope of loose stones and débris replaces the former forest.

This is the history of many an Apennine which looks so fair at a distance. And the climate of Italy has been changed for the worse by the destruction of the forests, for that described by the classical writers as prevailing in Italy in their day must have been milder than the present; the clothing of the ancient Romans, for instance, could not have been fitted to withstand the icy blast of the tramontana of to-day.

Effect on Climate.

After the Unification the Government took over from the former States the domain lands and forests still existing, and

has acquired others by the suppression of the monasteries. Unfortunately, the needs of the treasury led to the sale of some of these forests to private speculators, who have only thought of cutting down the trees without attempting to re-plant. The remainder of the forests have been left under State management. A school of Forestry exists in the ex-convent of Vallombrosa, provided with a staff of professors, and here a certain number of young men are trained in forestry and are afterwards sent as inspectors and sub-inspectors to the various Government forests. Nurseries of young trees have also been formed, and these are given to private owners upon certain conditions. A number of admirable laws, copied from the forest laws of Germany and France, were also added to the Italian Statute book.

A School of Forestry.

The chief forests in Tuscany are those of the Abetone, and those of the former convents of Vallombrosa and Camaldoli, now under Government management. There are also extensive woods in the Maremma and along the sea-coast, belonging partly to the Government and partly to private individuals. Among them is the Pineta of the Royal game preserve at San Rossore, near Pisa.

The Chief Forests.

Whoever has visited those former sanctuaries and noted the regular lines of magnificent fir trees climbing the mountain sides and mingling with the natural growth of beech, will acknowledge that the men of prayer were also men of labour, and will feel grateful to them for preserving these oases of verdure in the midst of the surrounding waste of naked and melancholy hills. Filled with the song of birds and the noise of running streams, and carpeted with the wild flowers of early summer, these sylvan paradises still invite the wanderer to rest awhile and commune with nature in a nobler temple than any reared by hands.

Here also is a practical example of what may be done by co-operation and social organisation in agriculture. The life

of each individual monk would have effected but little, but the life of the community endured for century after century with a steady purpose, and enabled works to be undertaken and successfully accomplished which would have been quite out of the power of individual ownership. It will be a good augury for the future when the whole question of the re-afforestation of the mountains is undertaken.

The Re-afforestation of the Mountains.

It has been suggested that the whole chain of the Apennines should be declared State property and devoted to the growth of trees, compensation of course being given to the private owners and to the inhabitants of the mountain villages, who could find employment as foresters and woodmen instead of as goatherds and shepherds. But this implies a large expenditure.

Again a large portion of the centre of the Peninsula is marshy, producing malaria, and it must take much time and yet more money before this land can be reclaimed.

Agricultural Instruction.

These are the shadow sides to which must further be added the ignorance in which the peasants were purposely kept by former governments, their inbred conservatism and attachment to antediluvian methods, and also and not least, the disdain evinced until quite recently by the educated for rural occupations. Hence, despite the fact that Italy has a State Department specially devoted to agriculture, and that this Ministry has attacked its task with zeal, and intelligence, notwithstanding the fact that it has spared no pains in the matter of propaganda, by opening agricultural schools, by assigning premiums, by experimental stations, by exhibitions, and encouragement in every shape and form, the revival and profound modification of agricultural methods has only been noticeable during quite the last few years. It was needful for new generations to arise before the riches of the Italian soil could be appreciated as in the past, before many deep-seated prejudices

could be uprooted and a rational system of rural economy inaugurated.

The ancient aristocracy and the older bourgeoisie scorned the notion of letting their sons take up agriculture as a pursuit and study it as a science. They desired to see them inscribed as Masters of Art in some University, they wished that they should bear the title of doctor or advocate. By a happy thought the Government recently hit on the device of satisfying this petty ambition by also conceding the title of doctor to those who have satisfactorily completed a course of studies in the High School of Agriculture. Since then things have gone better, and there are now not lacking really learned cultivators who live upon and in the midst of their own fields and still retain and hold high and untarnished their ancestral coat of arms. We now meet with Marchesi and Conti, Senators and Deputies, who have passed their studies in husbandry, who have travelled in order to see what is done in other lands, and who are putting into practice on their estates the most recent modern agricultural improvements.

Graduates in Agriculture.

And their number nowadays is not small. Formerly they were rare exceptions. Among these exceptions it is but right to remember Count Cavour, who before becoming Italy's greatest statesman and regenerator was a practical farmer, and Baron Bettino Ricasoli, also a Prime Minister, who gave so great an impulse to viticulture and the wine-making industry in his ancestral estates of Brolio in the Chianti district that to-day the best Italian red wine goes under the collective name of Chianti. Nor must Prince Torlonia of Rome be forgotten who drained the Lake of Fucino in the province of Aquila, redeeming the land for fertile cultivation. And this occurred amid the general wonder and derision of the population who saw the Prince pouring millions into this enterprise (it is calculated that he spent not less than forty million francs), and all repeated a phrase that has since

Distinguished Advocates of Cultivation.

become proverbial, "Either Torlonia will dry up Fucino or Fucino will dry up Torlonia."

But leaving aside these historical instances, and while recording the fact with pleasure that some rich proprietors are at last occupying themselves with the welfare of their properties, investing capital and science and labour, all this is still but as a drop in the ocean compared to Italy's needs in this respect if she is to be regenerated economically.

The position of Italian agriculture is certainly most difficult for a foreigner to understand owing to the complexity and variety of methods of land tenure. There are, for instance, the so-called Latifondi, the old Latifundia or large estates of the Romans, which belong to rich proprietors and are usually left almost uncultivated. These owners are devotees of *Santa Pace*. They are content if they can lease their lands for grazing purposes, deriving thence some few thousand francs, and saving themselves the expense and trouble of investing capital, of administering the estate and of paying the onerous taxes laid upon cultivated land.

In sharp contrast to these Latifundi are the little properties, divided and sub-divided, that usually belong to a family that is numerous, and the members of which nevertheless insist that they must live upon the produce of the little piece of ground that pertains to them. And they do so live, but as a rule most wretchedly. These tiny proprietors have no capital available for manure, for buying good seed and modern agricultural implements. They still employ the plough and harrow in use in Virgil's day and described in the Georgics. Added to this, they are as a rule grossly ignorant, and thus on the one hand they hinder the progress of agriculture and on the other are condemned to lead most miserable existences.

Small Properties.

A typical example is furnished by the Island of Sardinia, where these minute properties are called *tanche*. The proprietors who cultivate them all live in the nearest villages, and often have to tramp many kilometres before arriving

at their *tanca*, and though they work hard upon it, what the impoverished soil can render is absurdly little.

Small Proprietors in Sardinia.

Consequently they are unable to pay the imposts wherewith their land is charged, with the result that their little property is inexorably expropriated on the part of the tax-collector and put up to auction. However, it never finds a purchaser, for fear of the *vendetta* on the part of the proprietor,—for the *vendetta* in Sardinia is almost a religion, although the people by nature are good-hearted and gentle. In this way, no purchaser being forthcoming, the expropriated lands pass into the possession of the State. But the State neither administers them nor cultivates such petty lands on its own account, and thus the question resolves itself to the benefit of the original owner, who quietly goes back to cultivate the soil without being obliged to pay the taxes.

Such minute properties, however, as those of Sardinia are not common to the whole of Italy. In other regions

Life on an Average Estate.

where they exist these alternate with larger estates, and as a rule they are of a size that permits the owner to live well if he cultivates himself, or even if he cultivates by help of day labourers. Usually such proprietors live in the nearest village or town, and early in the day walk over to their land, rifle on shoulder, and superintend the field-workers, who are paid by the day, and miserably at that. These, too, have usually to walk long distances from their dwelling-places to their work, for country cottages are almost unknown in Italy.

In some districts a proprietor lets his lands to a family of agricultural labourers and does not trouble himself further,

The Métayer System.

except to draw his rent monthly or annually. Finally, in Tuscany, and now also in some other regions, there prevails what is known as the Métayer System, in which the method of profit-sharing finds its simplest expression, and which generally works to the general contentment, though, of course, both parties

grumble,—but then grumbling is the farmers' special privilege. The Italian law defines the relation of the métayer to his landlord as a contract by which the cultivator of the farm has to divide the produce of the farm with the proprietor. In theory this métayer tenancy is annual, in practice it is generally indefinitely prolonged, and instances are frequent where a family of métayer peasants have worked for an estate for some three or four hundred years. Until recently these contracts have been purely verbal. Of course, a métayer may not work for any one but his landlord.

This system implies as a necessary corollary what is known as mixed culture, that is, the simultaneous cultivation of several different species of crop on the same soil and also the pursuit of domestic rural industries. Thus, corn and maize will be planted under the olive trees, and cabbages will grow in the rows between the vines. It is this intensive cultivation that gives Tuscany its garden look. And the reason for all this is that the peasant under the métayer system receives no salary. Hence being a simple partner with his landlord in the land industry he must extract from the soil all that is needful for his own sustenance and that of his family. He also has a traditional creed that he must eat bread made of his own wheat, drink wine extracted from his own grapes, dress his salad with oil pressed from his own trees, omelettes made from his own eggs, and so forth. On the other hand, too, this mixed culture assures to him an average annual income, because if in one year, for example, the vintage is scanty, he may find compensation in the wheat harvest, or that of the oil, the vegetables, the fruit, or *vice versa*.

Mixed Culture.

This form of contract is considered in Italy not only the most useful for both parties, but also the most humane, and it certainly has a good effect upon the people, who are usually gracious, charming and well bred wherever this system obtains, as well as law-abiding and less prone to be affected by subversive theories.

This is how the system, which is of great antiquity, works in practice. The landlord supplies the land, the farm buildings, the dwelling-house, the cattle, he advances the capital needful for the purchase of manure, seed, and whatever else is required. In a word, we have here to do with two partners of whom one is a capitalist and one a worker. The products as well as the expense, are divided at fixed dates into equal parts, excepting always the taxes which, together with all improvements, fall to the share of the landlord. The Tuscan proprietor will tell with a smile that his peasants at the fixed date invite their master to come for the annual reckoning with the phrase "venga a dividere la sua metà" (Come and divide your half), but matters are not quite as bad as this, though petty peculations no doubt occur. But the grain, for instance, is always thrashed on the central threshing-floor, and the sacks separated on the spot. Oil and wine, too, can easily be divided. Such products as vegetables and eggs are, perhaps, less easily checked.

How the System Works in Practice.

Certainly by this system the careful attention of the peasant to the soil is ensured, since he is the more interested party, but, unfortunately, as a rule the peasant is conservative, distrustful of all innovations and full of prejudices, and hence under the métayer system agriculture does not progress unless the proprietor is up-to-date and can persuade his underlings as to the advantages of more modern methods.

Effect on the Peasant.

The average size of the farms worked on the métayer system are from eight to ten hectares. The métayer family generally consists of five or six men, two or three women, who work as hard as the men, and the children who assist with the lighter work. As a rough rule it is calculated that there should be a man to every hectare, but of course this varies with the nature of the soil and the crop cultivated. The head of such a peasant family is called a Cappoccio or

The Métayer Family.

Photo by *S. J. Beckett, F.R.P.S.*

AN OLD SHEPHERD OF THE ROMAN CAMPAGNA

Massaro, and he is quite an autocrat in his small way. He need not necessarily be the father. It is always the most intelligent who is chosen to fill this position of trust, as it is he also who represents the whole household in all its dealings with the landlord or with outsiders, who keeps the accounts, the common purse, and effects all sales and purchases. His wife or some other female member rules the internal affairs of the household in the same manner.

In this connection it may be mentioned that there is no law of entail in Italy, so that every owner of land can deal with it as he desires. Nevertheless, estates often remain long in one family. The game on the land belongs to the proprietor, and cannot be shot without his permission, provided he surrounds his property with boundary marks and puts up posts in conspicuous places marked "Bandita," a word and custom that often puzzles travellers.

Schools of Agriculture.

There exist at the present time over thirty schools of practical agriculture maintained by the Government, many private institutions having the same end in view, and ten special Government schools for the teaching of wine-making, oil-making, viticulture, pomology, zootechnics, cheese-making, cattle-breeding, bee-keeping, etc., etc. Besides this, every province possesses one or more so-called "ambulant chairs of agriculture," whose professors hold lectures in the various communes, teach the people improved methods, give counsel in cases of plant diseases, reply to all questions put by cultivators, and also conduct researches and make studies in all departments touching agrarian matters, and all this at the expense of the Government. There are also some forty scholarships obtainable for entrance to the schools of practical agriculture, and at the expense of the Ministry of War lectures on agrarian matters are delivered to the soldiers, of whom so many are peasants who will shortly return to the land. Further, Italy possesses three Agricultural High Schools that take University rank, one at Portici near Naples, one at Milan, and one at

Perugia. Some Universities, like those of Pisa, Bologna, and Rome have an agrarian faculty.

In short, while under the old *régime*, agrarian instruction was an unknown quantity, there now come forth from these various institutions thousands of youths who must become wise proprietors and able stewards. Thus, the old type of fattore, or manager of the estates, and the old "massaro" or "capoccio," who managed all agricultural concerns, often in the former case to their no small personal profit, are being gradually displaced by young men who understand their business. Speaking of the old school of fattori, who often superintended several poderi, or united farms, on behalf of one landlord, there is an old proverb that runs—"Fammi fattore un'anno e se non diventerò ricco sarà mio danno" (Make me steward for one year and if I do not grow rich it will be my loss).

Displacement of the old Type of Managers.

In every province there are now to be found agrarian committees presided over by the chief cultivator of the province. In these committees the common interests of the farmers are upheld, and purchases are often made in common, for instance, of machines, or of seed. They are also encouraged to suggest to the Government possible improvements in methods and to do all in their power to raise the condition of agriculture in their district. Similar local committees are also formed in defence against hail, that terrible plague of the Italian farmer, by means of shooting into the hail-laden clouds. The formation of such committees is obligatory upon a district if two-thirds of those interested demand its institution. The cost of initial outlay and the annual expenses are divided among the landlords *pro rata* according to the benefits derived. The gunpowder supplied for this purpose is exempt from taxation.

Agrarian Committees.

Similar obligatory committees exist for the defence of the vines against the phylloxera, to combat plant diseases of all

kinds, and here again facilities are offered, as in the shape of the sale, at a greatly reduced price, of the tobacco juice required for the destruction of the insects that prey upon the fruit trees.

Protection of Birds.

These insect pests would, of course, be infinitely reduced if the Italian of all classes had not a perfect mania for shooting small birds. There is no bird, however tiny or tasteless, that is not mercilessly shot down and brought to market to figure as "game" (*caccia*) upon the household menu. A society has been formed for the protection of the feathered songsters and some laws have been added to the Statute Book, but so far the results are inappreciable.

Government Assistance to Agriculture.

It will be seen from the above that the Government is really not slack, and that it has devised not a few methods to assist and encourage agriculture. It also in various centres keeps deposits of the most improved types of agricultural machines of which the use, under certain very proper guarantees, is conceded for the normal length of fifteen days; it will even, in certain cases, give manure, seeds, grafts, plantlings, bees and other such stock gratis, and even furnishes the American vines, which it insists should supplant the native vines when they have been attacked by the phylloxera, besides indemnifying the owners for the plants it has ordered to be destroyed.

Commercial Museums.

At Turin and Milan are to be found commercial museums that supply, also gratuitously, all the data that can assist the development of the natural agricultural industries and publish regular trade bulletins. In various foreign centres, too, such as Berlin, New York, Buenos Ayres, Zurich, Trieste, there have been opened Government Enotechnic Institutes, from which Italian producers have a right to enquire about local markets and to which they can send samples for distribution among foreign firms. Commercial *attachés* are also now added to all the chief Embassies and do most useful work.

In short, the Government, with its most limited means, has done wonders. Nor have the fruits of this wise policy been few. There are in Italy to-day rural properties that are veritable models of their class, where electric force is utilized and everything is done on a scientific basis. Within the ten kilometre radius of Rome, where lie the lands expropriated to free the city from malaria, can be found really splendid estates. Worthy of mention among these is the Colony at Ostia, a co-operative society of Romagnoli peasants, who have turned into a gay garden the swampy soil of the Agro Romano. Equally exemplary in the same Agro is the Cervalletta estate, that can show irrigated fields, and stalls and stables of the latest type for the rearing of milch kine. Even in retrograde Sardinia a Milanese co-operative society has made a successful attempt at modern rural colonization.

Results of the Government Policy.

The economic condition of the farmers varies according to locality and system. They are generally good in the North and in the larger part of Central Italy, good wherever the métayer system prevails, bad in the South where the proprietor does not manage his affairs with technical knowledge or has scant capital at his disposal, so that he gets little from the soil and less from rural industries, wherefore he is the frequent victim of money-lenders. This latter circumstance also springs from the fact that the proprietor must pay his workmen at once, and is thus out of pocket for perhaps a year, before he can refund himself. Consequently he is too often forced to pledge the forthcoming harvest, borrowing the money at high rates of interest.

Economic Condition of the Farmers.

To remedy this system Government Land banks and rural Credit Institutes are being formed.

The condition of the day labourers is wretched. Their average wages are two francs in summer and one and a half in winter. They usually live in miserable hovels, and

Photo by *S. J. Beckett, F.R.P.S.*

A WOMAN BUILDER AND BRICKLAYER

The Day Labourers.

often so far from their work that when they are engaged by the week or month they prefer to camp out rather than tramp the long distances after hard work done on scant nourishment. It is rare, too, for them to find continuous work, and even when they do work under contract the pay is deducted for wet days. Small wonder that among this class the subversive doctrines of demagogues find ready acceptance, and that there have resulted the " Leagues of the Labourers " that have organised many strikes, which have almost always proved advantageous to the strikers.

A Common Scourge.

One of the scourges of the peasants is a skin disease, a species of leprosy called " pellagra," that frequently ends in madness. It is induced by insanitary conditions and by the eating of damp or musty maize. To obviate this there are inspectors who investigate the grain deposits and who oblige the districts, where the maize has not properly ripened or is damp, to erect special desiccating kilns for this crop, which according to the old methods was merely hung outside the house to be dried by the sun. And picturesque do such labourers' homes look in the autumn, often all looped round with garlands of the bright golden cobs of the " Turkish corn," as it is called in Italy. Also, where " pellagra " has taken hold, the poor sufferers are removed to special hospitals, or if nursed at home the salt needed for the cure, that essential but in Italy so costly condiment, is supplied gratis for their consumption.

Decrease of Malaria.

Malaria is another curse that the Government does its best to combat, and which is in many cases yet another legacy from years of misgovernment. Quinine is given gratuitously to labourers in malarious districts. It is also prescribed by law, since the discovery that a species of mosquito carries the infection, that in the malaria zones fine wire or cotton nettings should be fixed in front of all doors and windows and even over the chimney tops. And malaria has certainly decreased, and

could decrease still more, but obviously the Government cannot provide against the careless leaving open of all doors, or against torn and neglected netting.

The King's Interest in Agrarian Affairs.

How much the King has agrarian interests at heart he proved in 1905, when in an open letter dated February 5th, and addressed to the then Prime Minister, Giolitti, he commanded him to study the question of founding an International Institute of Agriculture on lines that had been suggested to His Majesty by the American philanthropist, David Lubin. And since the King is energetic, and does not tolerate needless bureaucratic delays, within a month there was opened at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs a provisional office for the foundation in Rome of the proposed Institute, that decided to convoke representatives of the States in sympathy with the project and to formulate a programme for an International Congress.

International Institute of Agriculture.

The aim of this Institute is to promote intercourse between various countries, in order to learn the status of rural labour, the improvements effected, the latest discoveries, to establish an exchange of products—in a word, to seek to do for agriculture what the Labour Exchanges are doing for workmen, and it has this advantage over the Labour Exchanges that while these are usually maintained by the contributions of its members, all more or less poor themselves, this Institute is to be financially supported by the various States that have given their adhesion to the project. At the first Congress, held in May, 1905, in the Roman Capitol, King Victor Emmanuel himself presided, Mr. Lubin was also present to explain his views, and delegates from many nations, including even China. The King on this occasion announced that as his personal contribution he ceded to the Institute for its maintenance the rents of two Crown estates, a gift worth at least £12,000.

Wine culture is the most extended and most remunerative

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A ROMAN WINE CART

Italian agrarian product. All through the Peninsula we encounter vineyards, we see them equally on the foot hills of the Alps and in the hot plains of the South. Where culture is mixed, as in Tuscany, the vine alternates with olive and fruit trees. For after France, Italy takes rank as the first wine-growing and producing country, turning out in average years some 45,000 hectolitres, and this exclusive of the grapes and the "must" exported especially from the South for the wine-making of other countries. Indeed, was not the country once called Enotria, the land of wine?

Wine Culture.

Few plants seem to have so many enemies as the grape. What with the old diseases, and new diseases, swarms of evil insects, mist, and hail, too much and too little rain, everything conspires to threaten the precious vines from their setting in early spring until their maturity. The wind especially is a great foe. It rubs the bunches of grapes against each other, whereby many are pulled off and the rest bruised and injured, so that they do not reach the right point of sweetness and maturity. "The wind has drunk a great deal of wine," the peasants are wont to say after the "wild west wind, the breath of autumn's being" has been sweeping over their vine-clad hills in September. In the plains, where other crops will grow, they are less important than in the hills; but even then they are tenderly watched and discussed. But in the hills, where the broad stony slopes will grow nothing but olives and vines, they are all-important. To save them from their enemies they are now often covered with sulphur-dust in the spring, which the peasants blow over them from out of a queer tin apparatus. Disastrous is the effect if the rain comes too soon and washes the sulphur away. In some vineyards they use sulphate of zinc against the peronospora. This turns the leaves a dull, livid blue, which gives them a ghastly look, especially by moonlight.

Enemies of the Grape.

When the grapes have safely passed through the many

and great dangers that threaten them, and the time of the vintage approaches, their owners are full of activity. On all sides one hears a cheerful hammering of barrels and vats being put in order. In some districts the leaves are stripped off the vines that the sun may reach the fruit more easily. In others the leaves are left as a protection against hail. As the grapes begin to ripen, the paths leading to the vineyards are shut, and some child or old woman is set to watch against thieves. One cannot help wondering what sort of a protection they would be if thieves were really to appear. Occasionally, a fierce dog is let loose among the vines to frighten off intruders. It is strange enough that so little is stolen, for in many places there is no protection at all, no wall, no hedge, the vineyards running beside the open road. In the Chianti, where the best wine is made, the grapes are never touched until they are quite ripe, and three whole fine days must be allowed to pass ere they are gathered. The sun must have fairly risen for at least two hours before they are cut, as it will not do to gather them when damp with dew.

Time of the Vintage.

With the vintage begin lively and picturesque scenes. Sometimes an ox cart, holding a large tun, is used as a receptacle for the grapes, sometimes tall tubs called *bigoncie*, into which the precious fruit is put as it is emptied out of the baskets of the gatherers. Millions of earwigs sometimes come rushing out of these *bigoncie*. They are considered as a sign of "good grapes." Wasps also attend the vintage in great numbers. In the Chianti the grapes are crushed with a big wooden pestle before they are put in the vats.

When the sun begins to sink the gathering stops, and after supper the treading begins. A wild scene it presents in the big cellars, with the lucerne flashing fitfully on the big vats and dark laughing faces of the lads who are stamping the grapes. In the plains the *pressoir* is often used, sometimes driven by water-power, sometimes by hand force, sometimes by oxen.

Pressing the Grapes.

But the quality of the wine thus produced is not so good, as the mechanical press squeezes the stems and seeds, as well as the pulp, and thus gives an astringent and harsh quality to the liquor. It seems admitted, that, after all inventions and contrivances have been tried, there is nothing like the elastic, intelligent pressure of the human foot for drawing from the grape all that it is desirable it should yield, and leaving behind all it is best to eliminate.

There are many different methods of ultimate preparation, but for the first operation nothing is like the old fashion, Noah's way, as depicted by Benozza Gozzoli on the wall of the Campo Santo at Pisa. While this proceeding takes place day after day, night after night, with the ordinary grapes, the finer sorts are carefully selected and laid out to dry on reed mats stretched upon trestles. After a while the "must" begins to flow, and very sweet, agreeable, and insidious it is. Under its influence, the mirth grows fast and furious, now and then, though not often, leading to quarrels and license.

When all the vats are ready they are walled up in the cellars and left to ferment. It would be as much as a man's life is worth to look inside that dark, wide place during the first days of this operation. Some of these cellars, under the large old houses, look like caverns in the mountain sides, they are so wide and deep. Here the wine is left for about six weeks. Then the selected grapes, which were left to dry, are put into the vats, and the wall is closed once more. In ordinary cases it is opened again in January, when the wine is drawn off. The great proprietors, however, who have large airy cellars, and can keep them closed longer, sometimes leave them shut up as long as a whole year. The longer it thus remains the purer and stronger it becomes. In the plains the wine is occasionally boiled, to hasten fermentation, but this process is not to be commended. The wine thus produced is turbid and weak, and does not keep. In any case the ordinary Italian wine does not keep well, as scientific methods

The Wine Cellars.

of preparation are not generally employed, the peasants and often also the proprietors being too conservative. This is the more to be deplored as in her wine Italy has the potentiality of great riches. Some of the great proprietors, however, are now making wine which keeps its quality unchanged for years and is capable of export, and their example is being rapidly followed.

Quality of Italian Wine.

One of the main causes, however, which determine the unequal quality of Italian wine arises from the fact that Italian wine is nothing but pure grape juice, and is consequently dependent upon the quantity and quality of the fruit of which it is composed. German, French, and Spanish wines, on the contrary, are always doctored (" made malicious," the Italians phrase it), hence if the crop is insufficient in quantity other wine is added to the amount, if it is wanting in proper qualities chemical ingredients are mixed with it until the decoction acquires the desired body and taste. Thus, the cheap claret sometimes sold in England as "Gladstone" is made by mixing a thin inferior wine which comes from the country round about Marseilles, and has the proper Bordeaux flavour, with strong Spanish or Piedmontese wines. The Italian wine, it will be inferred from this, is infinitely the more wholesome of the two beverages and ought to be more sought after and popular.

It is hardly likely that the making of wine in the French sense will ever take root in Italy. The Italian has too great a horror of falsified wine. Genuine wine he calls " sincere." And since spirits of all kinds are fortunately dearer than wine in Italy, wines are not thus adulterated.

Of course, there is plenty of doctored wine sold in Italy, but it is reserved for the foreigners. The so-called Bordeaux and Burgundy furnished in the hotels, for instance, is more often than not Chianti " maliziato " (made malicious) with French bottles and labels.

The making of cognac and of liqueurs is a new departure but one that has already found great favour. Some of the

Italian cognacs are excellent, less fiery and more nutty in flavour than the French. Altogether, viticulture in Italy in all its branches is likely to increase in excellence and importance.

Italian Cognacs.

Another characteristic Italian product is olive oil, of which so much is consumed in the land itself, as it largely takes the place of butter in cooking.

Oil-making, as compared to wine-making, is a serious, not to say a dull occupation. It is not in early autumn, but in winter, that the olives ripen, and in place of the lively, rapid gathering of the beautiful clusters of the grapes, there is the stooping position, and the slow, steady picking of the fruit either from off the tree or off the ground, berry by berry. Then comes the careful sorting of the olives, upon which, in a great measure, the quality of the oil depends. "The first olives are gold, the second silver, the third are worth nothing," says the Tuscan proverb. When this operation is over, the fruit is put into a mill, where it is slowly crushed into a pulp under an enormous stone wheel moved by a simple contrivance, which is put in motion by water power in Lucca, that "land of streams," but in the drier portions of Italy by a donkey or an ox. This pulp, which takes a lovely purple-greenish hue, is then put into round receptacles woven of rope, and placed under a press, worked by hand with a bar. The oil which exudes trickles down into a vat placed on the floor below, in the bottom of which there is water. After this first pressure, which, made as it usually is of the finest olives, carefully sorted and washed, produces the best quality of oil, the pulp is once more put into the mill, mixed with a little boiling water, to be again pressed, producing oil of a second quality. A third pressure gives forth the oil for burning, and in the end the pulp is utilised as manure or made up into round cakes for burning together with the wood fires.

Oil-making.

When the vat is full into which the freshly-crushed oil is allowed to run, after having stood for a few days, so that all

the precious liquid rises well to the top, the oil is drawn off into jars called in Italian "orci," some of which are so huge as to render the stratagem of the captain of the Forty Thieves in the "Arabian Nights" quite intelligible. In these receptacles the oil is left to settle for four or five days, when the purer oil rises to the top and is again drawn off. Occasionally oil-jars have two orifices, from the upper one of which the better oil is drawn, while an inferior kind is taken from the lower. Some of these jars used in olden times to be beautifully ornamented, but such work is hardly ever done in these days. The oil when first made has a much deeper colour than that we usually see, and has a wonderful and delicious aromatic flavour, but, like many other lovely things, this is sadly evanescent. Unfortunately, there is a terrible amount of adulteration carried on with the oil, sometimes before it leaves Italy, more often after it reaches England, so that some kinds of oil can be bought more cheaply in England than in Italy. Cotton oil, which has neither flavour nor colour, is said to be extensively used for this purpose.

Use of Oil in Italy.

What olive oil is to the Italians one must live in Italy to appreciate. To such as like it, it is an almost perfect form of nourishment. Beans with oil and salt are held by the peasants a dish fit for the gods. It is touching to see how they will buy even tiny quantities of oil, as if it were impossible for them to go without it entirely. Foreigners often complain of the large amount used in Italian cooking, but, if they would but believe it, oil is far more digestible when used for frying than either butter or fat.

Rice and Chestnuts.

In the North of Italy a great deal of rice is grown. Unfortunately, it involves the risk of illness for those who plant and gather it, as it must grow in swampy soil. Chestnuts flourish more or less abundantly on all the Apennines and also furnish a highly nutritive food, especially to the rural poor, who even make a species of bread out of the nuts ground into flour.

Photo by *Chas. Abéniacar, Naples*

TRANSPORTING HEMP

An approximate idea of the produce of agricultural Italy can be obtained by learning that the cultivated lands range in the following decreasing order: cereals, timber, vines, maize, olives, beans, chestnuts, Alpine pastures, rice, potatoes, lentils, vegetables, fruit, hemp, cotton, flax, agrumi (oranges and lemons), beetroot for sugar-making, and tobacco. The latter plant could be a source of great gain and would be much more widely cultivated did not restrictive laws obstruct. The white mulberry is also largely grown on account of its leaves, required for the silkworms whose rearing is one of the most important and lucrative home industries of rural Italy.

Agricultural Produce.

Nor must the raising of fowls be forgotten. The exportation of these and of eggs is increasing annually and has become of great importance. And so is the raising of the pigs that furnish the celebrated Mortadella of the Emilia and Modena.

Last but by no means least a word must be given to the cultivation of flowers for home, and yet more for foreign, consumption. These are grown principally in Liguria and in Tuscany, and exported to England, Germany, Austria and France in ever-increasing quantities. It is calculated that from these fragile goods alone Italy gains over one million francs annually.

Flower Cultivation.

And it is pleasant to note that in every department there is progress, financial, economic, scientific, so that with time and wise legislation, rural Italy has, beyond a doubt, a great future before her

CHAPTER X

INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE

THE great commercial expansion, the progress made by industry, especially in Northern Italy of late years is something quite remarkable. This, too, in despite of the hampering and somewhat heavy tax imposed upon manufactures and industrial undertakings, a tax which in 1905 produced an exceptionally large sum, thus showing an increase both in the capital and the labour employed. And the progress might be even greater but for the lamentable inefficiency of the railways, which seriously hampers commerce. The railways, indeed, and everything connected with them, are a disgrace to the country. They have been starved and crippled for want of a timely expenditure of money and choked in development by pedantic bureaucratic impediments, and this in a land whose people are the finest engineers the world can show, and whose labour has built half the railways, bridges, and tunnels on the face of the globe.

Commercial Expansion.

The two chief Italian industries are those of silk and cotton. In the former department Italy takes the second place in the world's output after Japan. In the matter of cotton-spinning she has indeed cause to be proud, for from being an exclusively consuming land she now rivals the countries who turn out cotton goods, and not only can supply all her own needs but is able to export.

There are, however, certain special industries that are peculiarly characteristic of Italy. Among these is the commercial art of the Lucca image sellers, the alabasters, raw and sculptured, of Volterra, the marble blockers-out and pointers of Carrara and the district round, without whose able aid few

Special Industries.

sculptors would know how to put their statues into marble, the straw workers of Tuscany, the mosaics of Venice and Rome, the variety known as *pietre dure* of Florence and Naples, the tapestries of Rome, the *papier maché* sculptures of Lecce, the artistic pottery of Florence, Imola, Faenza, and Pesaro, the wood-carvings of Florence, the wrought-iron work of Siena, the artistic glass and beads of Venice, the choice and graceful goldsmiths' work made in practically all the larger cities with skill and taste, the laces of Burano, of Santa Margherita, of Como, and also in a degree of all Italy, as this is essentially a home industry, the imitation of antique objects in wood, iron, terra cotta, the falsification of Old Masters, of which Tuscany is the chief centre, the coral works of Torre del Greco, Leghorn, Chiavari and Genoa, the art furniture of Venice, Milan and Florence, the horn and seed buttons of Milan, the candied fruits of Calabria and Sicily, the sausages of Bologna, the Parmesan cheeses of Reggio, Lodi and Parma, the infinite varieties of *paste* (erroneously called by foreigners under the collective name of maccaroni) of Naples and the district, the *torroni* (a species of hardbake), and *mostarda* (a kind of sweet pickle) of Cremona, the *panforte* (an honey and almond cake) of Siena—to name but the most salient.

Image Sellers.

Wherever one travels, be it in the Old or the New World, bright-eyed, polite-spoken boys carrying baskets full of plaster statuettes, reproductions of famous ancient or modern works of art, portraits of notabilities, images of the Madonna or the saints, are to be met with. These are the image-sellers of the Lucca district, wanderers by nature, but also intensely patriotic and devoted to their native soil, to which they almost invariably return as soon as they have accumulated a little fortune. Indeed, a merry tale constantly repeated in Italy maintains that such wanderers have the Lucchesi been from all time that the first person Columbus met with on landing in America was a Lucchese image dealer who offered him his wares. Whoever has roamed in that charming hilly

district will note everywhere the evidences of prosperity, white little homesteads, bright cafés and shops generally bearing foreign names, such as Villa New York, Café of the United States, Restaurant Brazil, or the Argentine Grocery Stores. These are the outward and visible signs of the fortunes made by these emigrants. They usually start upon their careers at about ten years old as assistant to some experienced vendor. They are fed and clothed by this master, who generally also pays them five hundred francs for the trip, that is as a rule of two years' duration. When the boy has learnt a foreign tongue and the ways of the trade he will start on his own account.

Originals of Images.

These itinerant dealers can turn out a quantity of plaster images cheaply and yet artistically. All their products reveal innate feeling for form and taste. Sometimes they are originals, sometimes copies. In the latter case the models which they copy and generally reduce, when not famous masterpieces, are not infrequently the work of some clever artist who cedes to them the right of reproduction. Or sometimes their trained eye and hand permits them to reproduce works they may happen to have seen. Some years ago there was a great agitation on this account among French artists; they did not recognise that cheap reproductions helped to popularise their works and could in no way interfere with the sale of the originals. The slender cost of the primary materials allows of the sale of these plaster images at very low prices, though the boys often ask as many francs as they will eventually take pennies rather than lose a sale. They are generally merry little rogues who win the buyer's heart by their pretty manners and clever repartee.

Workers in Alabaster.

The workers in alabaster, that species of white shiny stone that closely resembles marble, but which unlike marble is easy to work, as it is quite soft when first extracted from the quarries, are to some degree trade rivals of the plaster figurine sellers. That is to say they can also reproduce the same work in

hundreds of copies, but the execution and above all the last finish require real artistic ability.

Speaking generally, alabaster is found nowhere in the world outside of the province of Pisa; Volterra is the centre of the industry, which is probably as old as the town itself, *i.e.*, some 4,000 years. As the Greeks gave the name of alabaster to boxes for ointments, it may have been a box of Volterra alabaster that Mary Magdalene broke, or, more correctly, opened, to minister to Jesus.

There are two kinds of alabaster, that for sculpture and a less fine quality for miscellaneous objects. The centre of the latter industry is Volterra itself, of the former Florence. In both cases all the work is done by hand, and even the excavating from the mines is effected without the aid of machinery. By a process of manipulation, alabaster can be made to look like the finest white marble, and statues and busts thus "doctored" are constantly sold to tourists as fashioned in the nobler stone. There are, however, also unknown obscure artists of no mean value who work in alabaster.

Kinds of Alabaster.

"Mute and inglorious," too, are the crowd of Roman and Florentine artists who turn out the so-called "commercial art," that is, cheap products, easily saleable, especially to foreigners, of really charmingly tasteful objects intended for domestic and household uses. Among these we may note copper implements of all kinds, elegant little figures to hold electric light, terra-cotta decorations for architectural purposes, and so forth. These hard-working artists do not treat directly with their clients. They are usually the slaves of commercial agents who give them their commissions and then send the result direct to the large shops or warehouses, or export them abroad. It is grievous to think that many of these men, had they but had a little capital or a little help, could have been real artists on their own account. Of such commercial art Italy exports annually for a sum of over 20 million francs.

Commercial Art.

This same regret over lost or misapplied ability refers in yet greater degree to those who make the false antiques manufactured almost entirely to meet the demands of the foreign market. The craze for all that is old, merely because it is old, irrespective at times of beauty or, it must also be added, of hygiene, has led to the creation of this industry. Consequently those who will not look at a modern Italian work of art, and condemn that art in no measured terms, calmly buy and fill their galleries with skilful *pastiche*, which they designate with high-sounding names and which all the while are the handicraft of the very men they feign to despise.

Manufacture of False Antiques.

This industry, too, brings in many millions to the Peninsula, and though it is easy to censure it on the score of ethics, this is but one of the many instances where in Industry and Commerce the demand creates the supply.

Works executed in straw are a pretty speciality of certain districts, particularly of Tuscany, where the fine straw, a particular variety grown for this purpose, is worked up into various objects and executed with great manual skill. The straw market held once a week in Florence under the Loggia of the Old Market is an attractive sight. Here are sold the bundles of ready-prepared straw cut into lengths for plaiting, of various qualities of fineness and of a rich golden hue. A quaint sight, too, in the neighbourhood of Florence are the straw hats laid out upon the fields to bleach in the sun.

Straw Wares.

The workers in straw are as a rule women, and the industry is generally exercised in their homes. The wares vary according to momentary fashion or demand, fans, frames, sunshades, baskets of every shape and size, but all more or less *objets de luxe* that reveal in their designs the taste of a population accustomed to feast its eyes upon lovely objects. Thus, for example, the laces made of straw to trim ladies' hats are frequently of a pure Renaissance design or have outlines that recall the Italian Gothic of the churches.

All these objects are made from the plaited straw and from these plaits, too, are made the variety of straw hats of which the finest quality used to be known in old days as "Leghorn."

Until Japan came into the European markets with her cheap wares, straw plaiting was a lucrative industry by which the women added substantially to the family income. Now it is miserably remunerated. Nevertheless, the women still ply their clever fingers or their looms without rest between one domestic occupation and another, chatting or gaily singing all the while. In the roads and villages round about Florence whenever the sun shines, and that is often, it is a daily sight to see along the streets or on the thresholds of the houses picturesque groups of women and girls plaiting straw busily and with lightning rapidity, their tongues meanwhile going almost as fast as their nimble fingers. Nor do they seem to need to look at what they are doing, so skilled are they in this often intricate manipulation.

Straw Plaiting.

The Florentine mosaics or *pietra dura* are less fashionable now than fifty years ago, still there is always a sale for the exquisitely accurate reproductions of flowers and fruits incrustated into frames, inkstands, tables or other objects. These cannot indeed be turned out very cheaply as it needs skill and taste to find the suitable shades of stone. Cheap, on the other hand, and largely made by machinery are the Roman mosaics, consisting of very fine tesserae put together to resemble bunches of flowers or arabesque designs. Once an art it has now degenerated into the cheap and tawdry.

Florentine Mosaics.

Venetian or Byzantine mosaic is that variety which in the early centuries of the Christian era formed the splendid and durable decoration of the churches. Indeed, the artist Ghirlandajo was wont to maintain that mosaic was the only painting for Eternity. This kind of mosaic consists of the skilful putting together of

Venetian Mosaic.

small pieces of enamel, marble and gold leaf, between layers of glass, technically called tesserae, of different colours, so as to produce the effect of a picture or painted design. The process is partly artistic and partly mechanical. Venice is still the headquarters of this industry, and we have it on the authority of Sir Henry Layard that the Venetian mosaicists of the present day are not inferior to the best of those who worked in St. Mark's, and that when criticism is directed against a mosaic coming from a Venetian atelier it is not the atelier that is to blame but more probably the author of the cartoon for the copy.

Tapestry Weaving.

A traditional Italian industry that is not progressing is that of tapestry-weaving. This work exacts great patience and also a large expenditure of time; ten years are often required to finish one piece of tapestry. Hence, few persons are found to follow this craft in our busy, fevered epoch, and it is with difficulty that the high standard of the Tapestry-Making Institute of S. Michele at Rome, founded in 1710 by Pope Clement XI, to rival that of the French Gobelins, is maintained.

Modelling in Papier Maché.

Modelling in *papier maché*, to which I referred above as a speciality of the Terra d'Otranto district, is chiefly employed to form large statues, often over life-size, adapted for churches that cannot afford figures made of more expensive materials. It is a queer sight wandering through the picturesque rococo streets of Lecce to come at times upon whole groups of such painted or half-painted saints and virgins standing out by their "wild lone" by a house door or in some piazza drying in the sunshine. These statues are really made with great skill and considerable ability and are not always confined to sacred themes. They are occasionally original creations due to obscure artists, profoundly enamoured of the plastic arts but deprived by lack of means from working in a nobler medium. For this is one of the peculiar gifts of the Italian

artizan employed on work that demands some responsibility or personal initiative, that he grows fond of his subject or his material, and seeks to put into it something of his own personality. In short, they are all endowed by nature with artistic souls, though these may have been overlaid by centuries of poor taste and repressive government. Power of execution was never deficient, it was merely badly applied.

The Ceramic Arts.

In the ceramic arts Italy is returning to her own best traditions. She has been distanced by other nations in the domain of porcelain, but she still holds her place and is highly distinguished in the domains of earthenware and majolica. The first potter who successfully revived the old Italian majolica ware and applied it to purposes of modern life was Cantagalli, whose name being interpreted is "Crowing Cock," as his trade-mark illustrates. The firm had long existed as makers of common pottery. It was a trifling incident that caused them to branch out into decorative work. One day a poor whitewasher came to Signor Ulisse Cantagalli saying: "I am dying of hunger, and if I do not find work and food I shall drown myself in the Arno." Signor Cantagalli, seeing he was serious, then and there took him into the works and set him to paint leaves and flowers on pots. The whitewasher took kindly to the occupation and became a clever painter of majolica, in which art he also instructed his two sons. The new products created a furore, and were eagerly bought up by the public, and the whitewasher soon had a whole army of men working under him. Cantagalli is extremely successful in adapting to his own pottery the designs and shapes of various styles of work. His ware is made of an inferior quality of earthenware on which is applied a superior quality of enamel, with which very fine results are obtained. The painting is all done by hand and executed on the raw glaze.

The Marchese Ginori also owns a factory which dates from the days of the Grand Dukes. China as well as earthenware

is turned out by him, and also excellent copies of Capo di Monte, of which he owns some of the original models. The Arte della Ceramica, whose products took the gold medal at the St. Louis Exhibition, also make choice and dainty *objets de luxe*, though there is at times about their output too pronounced a flavour of that restless species of design known as *l'art nouveau*.

An Old Factory.

One of the peculiar features of this Italian ceramic industry are the large number of men working in a small way, almost alone, and turning out excellent and original work, which from the fact that they produce it alone and not in factories, preserves for it an individual character that never lapses into the purely commercial or mechanical.

Individual Work.

Individuality is also met with in the so-called peasant ware, the rough majolica used by the people for their plates and dishes of which almost every province has its own speciality, and which, rude in design and workmanship as it often is, is also frequently of real beauty both as regards colour and quaint drawing. It is in little villages and local markets that specimens of this ware can be picked up, and as it is growing rarer, the people desiring like their betters to eat off porcelain, it is also getting to be of some value and worth collecting apart from its decorative charm.

Peasant Ware.

An interesting new industry is that of the so-called Signa ware, a species of terra cotta, in which reproductions of old and modern sculpture are made with wonderful success. In this medium, by some process kept secret, this fragile substance is rendered harder than stone and toned to an agreeable yellowish tint; it is also possible to reproduce the very aspect and character of bronze.

A New Industry.

These Signa terra cottas, sold at a relatively low price, permit of the possession in house and grounds of some of the

Photo by *S. J. Beckett, F.R.P.S.*

WOMEN AT WORK

masterpieces of plastic art. The centre of the industry is Florence.

Wrought-iron Goods.

A great revival is noticeable in the making of wrought-iron objects, such as gates, lanterns, etc., once a glory of the Italian artizan, and excellent specimens of this craft are being turned out, especially in Siena, Venice, and the neighbourhood of Florence. The Italian blacksmiths have not lost their cunning and the modern work can stand beside the ancient which it usually copies or imitates, in accordance with the fashion of the day. And here again it is the independent worker rather than the factory-system that produces the best results.

The Lace Industry.

A number of independent workers also exist in the lace industry, which is to be found more or less all over the Peninsula. In Venice and the islands, however, where the art was beginning to decline, it has been systematized under the patronage of Queen Margherita and a committee of ladies, and needle and bobbin laces of the finest types are again to be obtained, as the industry is ever increasing in excellence and quantity of output.

Rearing of Silk-worms.

Of course, this is essentially a woman's industry. Another woman's industry is the breeding and rearing of the precious silkworms on whom depend Italy's most lucrative export. This occupation requires less than two months to bring all the requisite operations to a happy conclusion, from the hatching of the eggs to the spinning of the cocoons. Constant attention, cleanliness, and an even temperature are the chief requisites, and during the last week of the caterpillar's life the women and children, to whose care they are almost entirely confided, can rarely sleep, for the creatures need incessant feeding and tidying. So much space do they also occupy towards the end of their life that it is not unusual for a peasant family to camp out during this short period, leaving the house entirely in the possession of the silkworms. And what can they not devour,

these little worms? The stripped branches of the white mulberry, specially grown for their nutriment, testifies to their voracity and accounts for the bare look of the trees in early summer. It is calculated that one ounce of eggs eats in the course of its life over a thousand kilos of mulberry leaves, and requires as much oxygen to breathe as six men.

Before these eggs are placed on the market they are subjected to most careful microscopic examination. Here, again, women are employed, but education and specialist knowledge come into play in this department. By most scrupulously exact methods species are selected, breedings are effected, and infected seed is eliminated. In this way the race is constantly improved with happy results for the precious golden threads that the caterpillar spins around itself. Besides this, Italy possesses a large number of factories where the raw silk is worked up into materials, velvet, piece silks, ribbons, shawls and what not besides. The centre of this industry is Como and its environs.

Decline of the Coral Trade.

The coral trade is on the decrease, in part owing to the caprices of fashion, in part to the primitive system on which it is carried on, the fishermen with primeval instruments, tearing up everything that comes into their way, and so destroying the young branches and checking reproduction. To discover a coral bank a man needs an experience which becomes almost an intuition, and this the Italian fisherman possesses in a high degree. The invention of coralline and other chemical substitutes for the real article has also ruined the fishing and spoilt the trade. Corals are chiefly worked by women. One class of goods that always finds purchasers are the little red coral horns attached to the watch chain that are commonly worn by both sexes throughout Italy, but more particularly in the superstitious South. These horns are supposed to keep off the *Jettatura*, or Evil Eye, in which almost every Italian, even of the educated classes, believes more or less firmly.

Celluloid, and other base imitations, have also hurt the tortoiseshell industry, but in the South it still holds its own, and the export is considerable. The sulphur trade, once the monopoly of Sicily, has found a serious competitor in Japan and in chemical discoveries. This decline in a once flourishing industry represents a serious problem for the island, whose misery is already sufficiently great.

Tortoiseshell and Sulphur Industries.

Such, all too summarily, are the chief Italian industries. As I have shown, some few are in decline, the greater number are advancing by leaps and bounds. Some (that are quite new) have also been introduced, as, for example, about 1900 the various manufactories of beetroot sugar that has already almost supplanted the cane sugar which Italy was formerly obliged to import. Unfortunately, the excessive price of sugar has not been lowered in consequence as was hoped; for the moment the industries began to flourish and the output to be appreciable Parliament clapped a tax upon the manufacture that almost equalises the duty upon the imported variety. For the Italian Exchequer has not yet learnt that saccharine substances are a needful nutriment for the young of the nation and persists in considering it as a luxury. In this unwise manner, too, it stifles many a young enterprise.

The woollen industries, in the Middle Ages an Italian art, have revived considerably of late, and fine clothes are made that rival the English in excellence. The same applies to the making of felt hats.

Revival of Woollen Industries.

There is great activity in all iron and steel foundries and in the naval dockyards. Besides the great Government arsenals of Spezia, Venice, Castellamare, and Taranto, there are private firms of shipbuilders that are kept active meeting the demands of the home and foreign markets. In one year alone such private yards built over two hundred vessels.

Iron and Steel Foundries.

An important and progressing industry is that of

paper-making. Particularly noted is the hand-made variety, and more particularly that of Fabriano in the Marches, the oldest factory in Europe, dating from the fifteenth century. Thence has issued much of the paper of which Italy has furnished the material on which to print the bank-notes and obligations of several Continental States, and this hand-made variety, too, is sought after by artists and in its inferior but still excellent variety is so cheap that it is used as a common writing paper and sold by the kilo. Much of the cheaper writing paper sold in England under English names is also made in Italy.

Paper-making.

In all that pertains to the poligraphic arts Italy is active and in the front rank. This specially applies to typography and fine printing of all kinds, as well as to cartography. In the making of maps the Italians excel all other nations; those of the Geographical Institute of Florence, which is dependent on the Ministry of War, are unrivalled. In this connection it may be mentioned that, together with the excellence of the bicycles made in Italy, the Italian Touring Club (T.C.I.) is considered the best of its kind, and this on the testimony of non-Italian members. The subscription is very low, only six francs a year, and for that sum, unlike the French and English clubs, the members receive all its publications gratis. Its guides to the provinces of Italy and its maps, profiles of roads, etc., both inland and foreign, are beyond praise. Tourists who are bicyclists will find it well worth their while to join this T.C.I. Many hotels make special reductions for the T.C.I. members, and in no cases are prices raised, as is believed to be not infrequently the case for other clubs. The Club has instituted "repair boxes" in many out-of-the-way places, has inaugurated shelters on mountains and other thoughtful conveniences. The head offices of this Club are at Milan.

Typography and Maps.

Italian Touring Club.

Bookbinding of a most attractive kind, especially in

A PEDLAR

parchment and vellum after the style of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is another Italian industrial art. Of this the headquarters are Florence, Siena and Rome.

Bookbinding.

It is pleasant to note that Italian productions are now honoured in the land of their origin, while until recently foreign goods were always demanded and native products despised. This naturally led to the falsification of trade-marks. Matters even went to the length of provisionally exporting certain goods which were then re-introduced into the kingdom as foreign wares.

Demand for Native Goods.

The port of Genoa has assumed such commercial importance as to rival that of Marseilles. Indeed, by nature Italy is designated for a commercial country, owing to its physical conformation, its immense sea-board, and the many naturally excellent harbours.

Small shops selling the same objects are still the rule in Italy, but here, too, "general providers" are beginning to appear in the larger cities. There are also three very important and flourishing co-operative stores, with branches in various centres that supply all the needful alimentary and household requisites—the Unione Militare of Rome, the Alleanza Co-Operativa of Turin, and the Unione Co-Operativa of Milan. All these are open to the general public as well as to shareholders. The advance of the co-operative spirit in Italy is in fact one of the most marked features of the new century. Wherever the nucleus is sufficiently large, each village or class has its co-operative society, and the movement is only impeded from ramifying yet farther and deeper by the necessity for credit imposed upon certain sections of society, such as small officials or workmen who are not paid regularly, and hence cannot themselves pay cash down. Nevertheless, it is calculated that over four thousand co-operative general stores exist at this moment in the Peninsula.

Co-operative Stores.

Notwithstanding, trading on a petty scale holds its own. There are still found in Italy wandering pedlars who roam from village to village carrying their heavy packs either on their own or some donkey's shoulders, vendors of umbrellas, of hosiery, of cheap jewellery, of popular songs.

Pedlars.

A flourishing trade, too, is that of the tavern-keeper, especially in and about Rome, where wine is sold at every street corner or at every few miles along the road. Their sign-boards often flaunt queer, high-sounding names and also display huge blackboards on which is inscribed in cubital figures the price of a *foglietta* (half-a-litre). This is sometimes accompanied by the three words "Est, Est, Est," that puzzle a stranger. The origin of this custom is thus told. In the long ago past, a prelate who loved good cheer and good wine, having occasion to visit Rome sent his servant ahead to taste and test the wine at the various taverns he needed to pass, bidding him write the word "Est" wherever he found the wine praiseworthy. The man wrote the word "Est" on a number of taverns, but on one he found the liquor so excellent that he wrote "Est" three times.

The Tavern-keeper.

Happily, all this wine is sound and of really excellent quality, and happily, too, the Italian workmen still prefer it to absinthe or brandy or other vile forms of brain and health-destroying spirit.

A great source of riches for Italy are her mineral and thermal waters, of which every region possesses a number, many of which rival and surpass in medicinal qualities the famous spas of Germany. Indeed, this is a fountain of wealth that has not been sufficiently tapped as yet. The healing properties of the waters are not known as well as they should be outside the Italian borders. This arises partly from the fact that Italians are slow to comprehend the uses of liberal advertisement. A certain reticence, admirable in its origin, causes

Medicinal Waters.

them to shrink from praising wares they know to be good. It is only slowly and owing to foreign influence that advertising has come not to be regarded as a form of charlatanry. The table waters, too, that the soil furnishes in such variety, are all good of their kind and deserve to be more widely known and exported.

Catering for Tourists.

Finally, there flourishes in Italy more than elsewhere in Europe, what by a new form of phrase is known as the "Industry of the Foreigner." This constant influx of tourists has created other special industries to meet the demands made by the strangers, and above all keeps employed the hotels of every kind and sort wherewith the larger and smaller cities are crowded. It is calculated that this commerce of entertaining the foreigner brings an annual income of over three hundred million francs to the Peninsula. It is further stated that the gold these strangers (*forestiere*—men from the woods, the Italians call them) bring in makes it easy for the Italian Rentes to be paid in gold without the need to buy the precious metal at a high rate of interest.

CHAPTER XI

UNDERGROUND ITALY

ALTHOUGH the purpose of this book is to treat of the Italy of to-day, and not of that of yesterday, which, rightly or wrongly, is more often the one that attracts the tourist, still a passing word must be devoted to what is one of the most difficult problems with which modern Italy has to deal, in fact in familiar parlance her White Elephant. This is the Italy under the ground, the submerged land, whence her culture sprang, and which is still replete with interest and beauty, whose claims are insistent and on whose behalf the foreigner is even more clamorous than the native-born.

A Difficult Problem.

For the native-born is continually being met with the question, where the rights of the living come into conflict with those of the long-since-departed, as to how much of the all too scanty public store of wealth shall be deflected from the crying and imperative needs of the quick and be devoted instead to excavating and preserving the evidences of the dead. This knotty point the foreigner as a rule finds no difficulty in solving to his own satisfaction in favour of the dead. He comes to Italy principally to see its artistic treasures, its antiquities, and the more of those are available the better he is satisfied. It is not so simple for the Italian. He feels that he, too, has a right to exist upon his native soil, and regards with scant favour the uprooting of vineyards and olive gardens, and the razing of houses, in order to lay bare some hidden passage or relic of the long ago. In Rome above all this problem has assumed an acute form; for since the chief evidences of the ancient civilization are situated in the city's centre, it has been forced to extend its borders outwards, thus growing far larger than need be and leaving uninhabited tracts within its very core.

Photo by *Chas. Abéniacar, Naples*

IMPERIAL TRIBUNE, ROMAN FORUM

Yet, notwithstanding all this, and notwithstanding the often ill-informed and unintelligent criticism of strangers, modern Italy has done and is doing her duty by the records of her glorious past.

Whoever visits the Roman Coliseum may see on one of its arches a commemorative stone whereon is written how Pope Benedict XIV consecrated the Flavian amphitheatre to the Christian martyrs. This decision was arrived at in 1741, and its purpose was to impede the continual abstraction of stones from the Coliseum, which was being in this way destroyed piecemeal, the public regarding it as a convenient quarry. Incredible though it may sound, with stones thus abstracted in the Middle Ages there were constructed a number of the finest and most famous Roman palaces. The Barberini Palace for instance was entirely constructed from materials thus purloined, whence arose the Roman saying " Quod non fecerunt Barbari fecerunt Barberini."

Preservation of the Coliseum.

This little fact demonstrates in what esteem antique objects were held in the past, and just in that epoch, too, which we now consider the most artistic. It was thanks to the new legislation of Italy that ancient Roman theatres, villas and temples have been disinterred, excavations of far-reaching interest undertaken, important historical documents brought to light, and valuable artistic objects rescued from wanton destruction.

Public Interest in Excavations.

This is in large measure due to the initiative of a Roman, the celebrated doctor, Baccelli, Professor at the Roman University, who has also several times held the post of Minister of Public Instruction. His incentive and his measures have created a real enthusiasm for the culture of antiquity.

For other reasons, too, the study of archæology and art history has taken a notable development in Italy. One of these, and not the least important, has been the institution of a school of Italian archæology in Rome where

a special training is given to students and degrees bestowed that entitle them to hold posts in the various museums, galleries and art centres of the Peninsula. The course of studies is of three years' duration, two of which must be spent in Italy, and one abroad, preferably in Greece, and those who enter the school must already have taken their University Degree in letters.

School of Italian Archæology.

Attached to the Ministry of Public Instruction is a general administrative department "of Antiquity and Fine Arts." It is this department that issues orders and instructions regarding all excavations and under whose jurisdiction stand all the museums and galleries of the land. The work is thorny and full of knotty questions, and the department is greatly hampered in its activity by lack of funds. Besides this central administration the care of the excavations and monuments is confided to a regional commission, to whom are subject the local officials, the inspectors of excavations and monuments; these last in the smaller centres are often students of antiquity who exercise this function gratuitously and for pure love of the subject. Then, too, all buildings of any historical or artistic importance are being gradually taken under Government protection and pronounced "national monuments," which means that even the owners cannot destroy them, or pull them about, or change their fundamental character, as was too often the case in the past. Further, a most careful catalogue of all objects of worth, all pictures, statues, tapestries, articles of virtu, is being made through the length and breadth of Italy, for the purpose of putting a check upon the expatriation of treasures that are regarded as a portion of the national patrimony.

Department of Antiquity and Fine Arts.

Excavations to unearth the evidences of the various civilizations that lie hidden, as in a palimpsest, under the successive layers of the Italian soil, are carried on in various portions of the land, in Sicily and Latium, in

Magna Grecia and Etruria, and in the regions of ancient Parthenope. But the most important that are being undertaken at this moment are those in Rome, and more especially those in the Roman Forum, once the centre of Latin life. It is to help cover the heavy cost of these labours that admission is charged to those desirous of visiting these sites, though this source of revenue does not nearly meet the outlay.

Progress of Excavations.

In Rome it is Lanciani and Boni to whom are due the latest discoveries in this antiquarian field of research. Giacomo Boni is a genius in his own line, who by a species of archæological second-sight falls as though by mere lucky chance upon the most important sites and thanks to whom the whole history of early Rome, founded too often on intuitions and guesswork, will have largely to be re-written. It is he who has found the key to it in the remains of the Rome of the Republic and of the Kings, and even of the earlier Latin settlers. He has, among other most valuable discoveries, traced the true direction taken by the via Sacra, found the site of the Comitium, which was the place where the Roman people held their meetings in the days when they were divided into thirty Curiae, and discovered the much-discussed Niger Lapis.

Recent Discoveries.

This Black Stone, concerning which there has been so much talk, and which even formed the goal of an international pilgrimage, has been designated as the tomb of Romulus, or at least the grave of the man who for centuries was held to be the eponymous founder of the Eternal City. If this could be proved the claims of legend and history would be reconciled, but polemics still rage hot around this question, and there are many who hold that this Lapis Niger (a square of ground in the Comitium paved in black marble of a kind rarely met with in Rome) dates from a much earlier period, while others go to quite another extreme and consider it a recent restoration. Under the Black Stone was found an inscribed

The Black Stone.

pyramidal cippus or slate. Its inscription has agitated all archæologists and philologists, and opinions are as many and various as the men who propound them. Some hold that here are written a Table of Laws dating from the first kings of Rome, others that it deals with religious injunctions. Some go so far as definitely to maintain that it holds the Laws of Numa. The last word has not yet been spoken and perhaps never will be.

In the Regia, or house of the King, the oldest edifice in Rome, where the Pontifices also had their official residence, were found, when it was recently laid bare, some very coarse antique vases, that are held to date from the era of Numa, the second king of Rome.

The Ancient Vestals' House.

Other important discoveries were made with regard to the ancient site of the Vestals' House and the shrines committed to their care. Here were found many statues of the Chief Vestals more or less well preserved. Their names are written upon the pedestals. In one case the name has been erased, because the vestal probably became a Christian, as the date is late, 364 A.D. The great bell of the Basilica Aemilia, built 180 B.C., has also been re-discovered; probably more important still, at least as far as the eye is concerned, is the isolation of the Temple of Antonius and Faustina, dating from 141 B.C., which some years ago was half-hidden by modern constructions and by the silting up of the soil.

The Cloaca Massima.

As an instance of how the knowledge of history is modified by all these excavations, I may name the Cloaca Massima, which is now proved not to date from the epoch of King Tarquin, as was always maintained, but from the last period of the Republic.

There are many other interesting and important finds which the traveller can see for himself on the spot, or the student read about in the many handbooks that are issued, and which

only concern us here in their indirect effect upon early history and the need for modern students to re-write and re-cast it.

Excavations in Sicily and Naples.

The excavations in Sicily interfere less with the rights of the living than those of Rome, as most of the interesting relics of the Hellenic civilization remaining in that lovely island are situated in spots now deserted. This is not the case, however, with Naples and its environs. It is constantly cast up against the Italians, for instance, that they do not lay bare Herculaneum, that buried city which, judging from the treasures there unearthed, must still contain objects of rare value and interest. But those who so plead leave out of consideration that Herculaneum lies beneath the two populous towns of Resina and Portici; squalid, ugly towns if you will, but inhabited by live human beings who would not know where to turn if they were ejected from their home. This is not the case in dealing with Pompeii, where only rather poorly cultivated land needs to be expropriated in order further to extend the excavations over the whole length and breadth of the ancient city.

The Museums of Italy.

The museums of Italy, in which her treasures are garnered, are, of course, of deep interest, and as a rule these treasures are both intelligently and artistically displayed. Some of the custodians, who have issued from the modern archæological schools, are artists in their own lines, as, for example, Signor Milani, keeper of the Etruscan Museum at Florence, who has put into position in the gardens of the Institute a number of Etruscan tombs, reconstructed exactly as they were in their original sites and dispositions; Professor Salinas, who has taken all the dry-as-dust character out of the archæological remains that are under his care in the Museum of Palermo; Felice Barnabei, the arranger of that ideally beautiful National Museum in the Baths of Diocletian at Rome where the statues are blended with and relieved by green trees and gay-coloured flowers.

Every province, too, has its own museum of local antiquities, and many of these are also excellent in arrangement, as for example, that of Volterra, where the Etruscan funeral urns are disposed according to epoch, material and subject.

In short, despite foreign cavillers, full justice is done by modern to ancient Italy, and in this department, too, there is only praise to bestow.

Photo by *Giacomo Brogi, Florence*

MILAN CATHEDRAL, PIAZZA AND GALLERY

CHAPTER XII

MUSIC

THAT the Italians are musical and fond of music in the most popular and widest sense of the term is beyond question, though as a proof to the contrary the traveller will often point, and not unjustly, to the deplorable nasal singing in the churches, where both organ and human voice seem afflicted with chronic catarrh. This defect, however, is likely soon to be universally remedied, as the present Pope, who happens to be really musical, is recalling the Church to its own better musical traditions and has enjoined that the traditional Gregorian music, *i.e.*, plain song, shall take the place of the *pot-pourris* from operas and other mundane melodies that used to be too frequently employed during the most solemn functions with results that were certainly not edifying. Still it must in justice be added that such proceedings did not appear to Italians to strike a false note. They are gayer and more light-hearted than the Northern nations, and thus the church, though it is to them also the House of God, does not appeal to them with that awe, that sense of remoteness and aloofness that are felt by the English worshippers. It is to them really the house of their Father, in which they feel at home, into which they can enter at all moments, in all emergencies, and in every garb. This is a charming trait in the Italian character which foreigners, from lack of complete comprehension, do not sufficiently appreciate and often misjudge.

Church Singing.

But to return to the church music. This had fallen into much decay, despite the fact that both Verdi and Rossini wrote many compositions to meet the special needs of the Roman service; and it required the intervention first of Pope Leo XIII, and after of Pope Pius X, to recall it to its own best traditions.

Revival of Sacred Music.

On this account sacred music is now passing through a period of serious revival and time and thought are being bestowed on its cultivation. Thus, in several of the larger centres, committees of music-loving gentlemen and ladies foster and encourage the performance of some of the most famous musical Masses, subscribing towards the expenses of the orchestra and singers. Moreover the demand has increased the supply, and many of the better composers are writing church music. Notable among these are two men. One of them, Enrico Bossi, is by profession an organist and has composed much for his own instrument as well as for the piano. A concert oratorio, entitled "Paradise Lost," and a musical setting of the Song of Songs are much admired both for their melodious character and their musical correctness. More generally known is the young deacon, Lorenzo Perosi, born at Tortona in 1872, whom the Pope has nominated to the post of conductor of his famous Sistine Chapel choir. Before this appointment the Sistine choir was directed by the eunuch Mustafa, and to this day the singers in that world-famed chapel are all eunuchs, the Roman ritual not permitting of the singing of women in church. This physical condition on the part of the men is supposed to lend a special beauty to what are called their "white" voices. However, with the march of progress this particular type of singer is growing more rare, as parents are less and less inclined to sacrifice their sons to the barbarous and decidedly anti-Christian demands of the Pontifical choir.

The Sistine Chapel Choir.

Perosi, who had prosecuted his musical studies in Germany, endeavoured, nevertheless, to liberate himself from German influences, and while not neglecting the help to be gained from the German and Italian masterpieces in this line, he tried, and with success, to give a modern character to his music, basing it upon the modern science of instrumentalism and pervading it with a modern spirit. In 1897 he produced his first set of oratorio Trilogies, The Passion, the Transfiguration, and the Resurrection

The Oratorios of Perosi.

Photo by *Giacomo Brogi, Florence*

LORENZO PEROSI

of Christ. In these he sought to fuse the styles of Bach and Palestrina, to utilize Wagnerian effects, and at the same time to clothe the whole with a modern and Italian character. These church musical dramas excited a great interest on their first performance, and Perosi's talent was unanimously pronounced as interesting and strong, even if a trifle too theatrical for more sober tastes. They have been followed by many others, all treating of New Testament themes, though his latest oratorio, "The Death of Moses," is inspired, for the first time, by the Old Testament. It is said that he also intends to set to music a sacred drama with the Apocalypse for its theme.

Perosi's oratorios are performed not only in churches but also in concert halls, and are commonly conducted by him in person.

The Italian Opera.

But opera remains as it has always been, the truest expression of Italy's musical life. Indeed, music in Italy has always practically meant opera and opera only. It is the national form of art and appears to correspond to something in the Italian nature, which is less attracted to the more abstruse and scientific character of instrumental music. There was a moment when the stars of Italian opera seemed to have set. Their works no longer dominated the musical stage. Then there arose that extraordinary and versatile genius, Giuseppe Verdi, a man able to stand beside Meyerbeer and Wagner, and Italian opera once more held its high place in Europe.

Verdi's Genius.

Certainly Verdi's genius was in many respects unique. From his first to his last work, during an activity extending over sixty years, he never grew mannered or monotonous, never copied himself, and continually progressed in his art until in his eightieth year, in his farewell to the world, he produced not only an opera full of youthful vigour but one that introduced in his Falstaff a new note into operatic art. The libretto for this Falstaff was written for Verdi by the poet-musician,

Arrigo Boito, and is a free adaptation from Shakespeare. This same poet had previously adapted Othello for Verdi's composition, in a drama in which it is Iago rather than Othello to whom is assigned the chief rôle, this Iago being a very devil in human shape.

From the very outset Verdi was the darling of his countrymen, and this not only because his music was perfectly understood and appreciated by all, but also because he ministered to the patriotic spirit of the Italians, arousing overwhelming enthusiasm long before the notable years that followed 1859. Indeed, his very name served as a covert means of patriotic expression. For in the days when it was treason to wear the tricolour, or to shout "Long live the King of Italy!" the people would shout "Viva Verdi!" which being discomposed was meant to express: Viva V (Vittorio) E. (Emanuele), R. (Re), D. (d'), I. (Italia).

When Verdi passed away with the dawn of the twentieth century there passed away with him the man who had stood for musical Romanticism in Italy, and who had introduced colour and sharp characterisation into Italian opera. Indeed, Verdi resumes in his person and in the sequence and development of his work the whole Romantic movement from its first commencement to its last results as exemplified by Wagner.

"Aida."

It is "Aida" that first marked Verdi's modernity. It has been remarked that the chief feature of Italian opera is melody, while that of German opera is harmony. In Germany the orchestra gives colour and tone, in Italy it is only employed as an accompaniment to the voice. When the Khedive of Egypt commissioned Verdi to write for him an opera that should celebrate the opening of the Suez Canal, the Italian composer chose for his subject a theme culled from the history of the Pharaohs, and thus originated "Aida." With this work the musician definitely abandoned the old style of Italian opera, and in place of isolated airs sung by the various performers, substituted dramatic scenes. He still,

as a true Italian, clung to melody, but orchestra and voice were utilized more as an *ensemble*, as it is done by Wagner. At the same time he succeeded in giving an archaic colour to the music of "Aida" that suited the theme and text.

Boito's Operatic Work.

After Verdi it is Arrigo Boito who is the strongest of the modern Italian composers of opera, though his musical fame so far rests upon a single work, "Mefistofele," based upon the second part of Goëthe's "Faust." This was an important contribution to the history of Italian music, for it was the first attempt to fall in with the Wagnerian precepts. Indeed, Boito, like Wagner, wrote his own libretti, and it is quite a question whether he is not even greater as a poet than as a composer, and in which department his influence has been most far-reaching.

So far "Mefistofele" has had no successor, though for many years past it has been said that Boito was putting to music his poetic tragedy of "Nero," but though a few intimate friends have been permitted to read some portions of the long-promised work, so far it has not issued out of the composer's study, though twenty years have passed since it was announced as completed. The trouble is that Boito is a keen critic as well as a creator, and it is difficult if not impossible for him to be satisfied with his work, and till he thinks it attains to his own high standard he refuses to give it to the world.

But though Boito has not written much, his influence over contemporary Italian music has been most potent. This is especially noticeable in Ponchielli's masterpiece of "La Gioconda," of which Boito also wrote the text.

The Music of Pietro Mascagni.

Nor is it absent in the music of Pietro Mascagni, that young composer, who became world-famous at one flash in 1890 with his musical setting of Verga's tragedy of rural Sicilian life, "Cavalleria Rusticana." The son of a baker at Leghorn, Mascagni was brought up in an environment that was everything rather than artistic, but feeling the sacred fire within himself, and

determined to make a name and a career, he broke away from home and led a hand-to-mouth existence as conductor of a band, a partner in travelling companies, and what not besides, until he had attained to a practical knowledge of orchestration such as no theorising could provide. It was while thus roaming that he learnt that the Milanese music publisher, Sonzogno, had offered a prize for the best one-act opera upon any subject, and which if accepted he would stage at his own expense. Without delay Mascagni resolved to enter for the competition, and though the time was short, for he had seen the announcement late, he contrived just to finish his score in time, and after a long period of anxious waiting heard that the first prize had been adjudged to him. The success it met with was instantaneous and overwhelming and, despite some ungracious adverse criticism, has been maintained ever since. The fact is that despite certain commonplaces and a few plagiarisms, Mascagni revealed a gift of melody, and a real capacity for naturalistic and individual rendering, two qualities which have justly been called the two characteristic movements introduced into musical art in modern times, and evidences of that modern progressive tendency that manifests itself in all intellectual departments.

Mascagni's Later Works.

Unfortunately, the success of "Cavalleria Rusticana" turned Mascagni's head, and instead of resting on his oars and studying, he hastened to give to the world a successor. This, "L'Amico Fritz," and later "I Rantzau," both inspired by Erckmann Chatrian's idyllic Alsatian tales, were pronounced tiresome both as to theme and treatment, and though written with more care than "Cavalleria Rusticana," pleased less. By this care Mascagni had lost his freshness and did not gain in artistic force. Nor has he in the other works that succeeded these as yet redeemed his early promise of giving lasting and stable work to the world. But Mascagni is still young and repeated failures may teach him their valuable lessons.

Photo by *Giacomo Brogi, Florence*

PIETRO MASCAGNI

Meanwhile he has been distinguishing himself by a series of clamorous lawsuits undertaken against his American *impresario* who conducted him on a concert tour in the United States, and against the City of Pesro, Rossinai's birthplace, where he had been entrusted with the directorship of the Musical Academy instituted by the maestro in his native town, and from which Mascagni was dismissed as neglectful of his duties, a verdict against which he appealed to the law but with scant success.

A very different type of man is Giacomo Puccini, who, like Mascagni, belongs to the Young Italy school, and who also therefore desires to free his country's national art from the empty conventions of the past. To begin with, Puccini, born in Lucca of musical ancestors, had the advantage of living in a musical atmosphere in childhood and youth, and thus received a careful training fitting him for his profession. His first work, "Le Villi," which established his reputation in Italy, is founded upon a weird northern tradition and was perhaps scarcely adapted to operatic purpose, but the rare imaginative merits of the music caused the weakness of the libretto to be overlooked. His next opera, "Edgar," was a failure, after which he kept silent for some years. But when he once more challenged public opinion, it was to score a great success with his "Manon Lescaut," founded upon the Abbé Prevost's famous romance. The opera at once attracted by its dramatic strength, its melodious beauties. It was followed by "La Bohème," founded upon Henri Murger's delightful romance of that title, in which the graceful music, the orchestral colouring subtly reproduced the dominant character of the original. His latest work, a setting to music of Sardou's "La Tosca," has met with much popular favour.

Operas of Giacomo Puccini.

Puccini is still young. Much may, therefore, be still looked for from him, and it is certainly interesting to learn that Verdi regarded him as the most promising of his successors.

A rich banker of Reggio in Emilia, Baron Alberto Franchetti,

has distinguished himself by the writing of various operas which, if not notable for melodious qualities, are remarkable for their profound knowledge of counterpoint and their rich instrumentation. Of these the most successful in the popular sense of the word are "Asrael" and a melodrama, "Germania."

Baron Franchetti.

Like Mascagni, Ruggiero Leoncavallo sprang in one night from obscurity to fame with his opera, "I Pagliacci," a work equally unconventional, realistic, and attractive. Leoncavallo, who is also his own librettist, wrote this opera at the instigation of the liberal Milanese publisher, Sonzogno, to whom contemporary Italian music owes so much, and who also helped Leoncavallo to produce it before the public. The story of the strolling player and his faithless wife is too familiar to need repeating here, but the very simplicity of the subject dealing, as did "Cavalleria Rusticana," with a tragedy in modern peasant life, made it stand out as a suitable contrast to the usual operatic plots drawn from romance or from history adapted to stage exigencies.

Initial Success of Leoncavallo.

Like Mascagni, too, Leoncavallo followed up his success by failures, and especially great was the failure of his trilogy entitled "I Medici," which he had hoped would prove an Italian "Ring der Nibelungen." It was judged as neither original nor effective, and was clearly the work of a man who had not yet found his true style. It failed because naturalism carried to such lengths as Leoncavallo strove to carry it is not possible in opera, which, after all, is an unnatural and artificial art. Music can only paint in broad lines.

His Later Failures.

In 1905 Leoncavallo produced at Berlin an opera entitled "Der Roland von Berlin," a work written at the special request of the German Emperor, whose approval it has won. So far the work has not been heard outside of Prussia, and is probably too local to please elsewhere. So far, therefore, it

would certainly seem that, like Mascagni, Leoncavallo had said all he had to say in his first opera.

Beside these, who are the most famous, there are other writers of opera whose works are popular but rarely pass the Alps. Worthy of mention among these are Nicola Spinelli, a Roman, who won the second prize in the Sonzogno competition with a three-act opera called "A Basso Porto," consisting of scenes from Neapolitan life, and full of pretty, catching melodies. Pierantonio Tosta, who has also written a musical melodrama dealing with Neapolitan fisher-folk in his "Santa Lucia," Umberto Giordano, who has treated of the criminal association called "La Mala Vita," and many others. It is worthy of note that so many composers choose themes taken from the contemporary life of their land, thereby affirming their sympathy with the modern movement.

Other Composers.

It is a curious fact that in the writing of light operettas, as distinguished from operas, the Italians have not distinguished themselves, despite the attempts of a few composers, and despite the fact that this form of art is highly popular in the land.

Light Operettas.

It is, however, too early to judge of any of these younger men. Still, even if they have not won back for their country the sceptre that was slipping from her grasp with Verdi's disappearance, at least they have given sure and brilliant proof that the musical genius of Italy is not fading and that a new era is dawning for music with a new generation, so that United Italy may hope for a renaissance of musical art as well as of national prosperity and power.

In the department of instrumental music modern Italy is weak. Indeed, there cannot be said to exist a modern Italian school of instrumental music, and those few who cultivate this branch of the art produce works that have no local colour and are chiefly modelled upon German and French standards. Nor is Italy as prolific in good executants

Instrumental Music.

as she was when her players and leaders of orchestra were sought for all over Europe. In singers, however, both male and female, she is still rich, there being some quality in the Italian atmosphere that favours the development of full, mellow voices. There is a decadence, however, in the vocal methods, and what was known as "il bel canto" is growing rarer. This is said by the Italians to be due to the German music or music in the German style, which does not permit of the traditional methods of singing and hurts or forces the voice. This reason, however, does not account for or excuse the tiresome *tremolo* that Italian public singers of the newer school affect, which is wearisome to listen to and detracts from purity of tone. Still, the good system continues to be taught in Italy, and strangers go thither in crowds to learn it and Italians also go abroad to teach it.

Italy Rich in Singers.

In the writing of facile songs of melodious tone adapted for drawing-room singing the Italians excel. Here their native gift for easy melody comes into play. The most famous as well as the most deservedly popular among these is Francesco Paolo Tosti, who has for many years made London his home. His graceful, original and expressive harmonies are familiar all the world over.

Closely allied to this class of music are the popular songs of the people, often born none knows how or where or when. Of these the *stornelli* and *rispetti* of Tuscany are for the whole of Central Italy the most characteristic expression. A stornello is a little poem of three lines, one short one of five syllables, and two long ones mostly consisting of hendecasyllables. The five syllabelled verse rhymes with the second of the two eleven-syllabelled, while the first long line ends with an assonance. It is usually a flower to which the graceful, dainty little verse is addressed, but its true inner appeal is to love, either pleading, successful or rejected. Many of these *stornelli* are traditional,

Popular Love Songs.

The Stornello.

but in most cases the singer either makes his own to suit his individual needs or modifies those extant. They are sung to a mandoline accompaniment, and are as a rule intoned in a minor key, and penetrated with a languorous emotion. Sometimes the stornellatore, or singer of a stornello, is assisted by a chorus. In that case an intermezzo is interpolated that resembles the burden of a violin. As a rule the singers of *stornelli* seek to cap songs and verses and on warm summer evenings their improvised music makes dreamy echo in the lovely night landscape.

Another popular form of love song is the *rispetto*, which as the name implies, is a respectful greeting from a lover to his beloved. They consist of four, six, eight or even ten lines, though the most common form is the six-lined strophe. Guitar or mandoline accompaniments, more often than not improvised, assist the voice.

The Serenata.

In the Tuscan mountains at all seasons, even in winter, the Serenata or Inserenata are common. This means that a party of youths armed with guitars, mandolines or violins will set forth after sunset to sing of the love, hopes or sorrows of one of their number under the window of the girl he wooes. The verses are alternated with brief instrumental melodies, brightly decorated with shakes and arpeggi. In many districts these melodies are called Passagalli, a characteristically Tuscan word to designate this method of playing of violin, guitar, or mandoline to fill in the short pauses between the singing, that allow time for the Improviser, for these verses are usually improvised, to collect his thoughts and ideas. Such parties of singing swains have been known to continue their exercises from sunset to sunrise.

May Songs.

It is in the fair month of May, however, that this custom most obtains, and it is then not so much the loved object that is fêted as the month itself, that herald of summer. Here, again, we meet with another of those atavistic traits so common in

Italy, for we know that the Romans were wont to celebrate with songs and festivals the return of Spring. This wandering around at night to sing the advent of the lovely season is called Cantar Maggio (to sing to May), and the songs are called Maggiolati.

Dialect Songs.

It is, however, only in Tuscany that the popular songs have this distinctively individual character both as regards words and melody. The songs sung by the populace in the other regions are the Canzonetti set to music by some educated composer and hence not the spontaneous expression of the people's soul. In other districts, too, dialect is employed, especially the guttural Neapolitan and the sibillant Venetian, while the Tuscan is the pure speech of Dante and Petrarch.

Still the Neapolitan songs have a *cachet* that is all their own, and reflects the hot, passionate temperament of the region which is in such sharp contrast with the cooler, more sentimental and slightly cynical Tuscan. The prototype of the modern Neapolitan canzone can be sought in the popular "Funiculi, funiculà" of Denza, all alive with *brio* and sparkling with animal joy.

Festival of the Madonna of Piedigrotta.

Every year some new songs enrich the popular Neapolitan répertoire. At the annual fête of the Madonna of Piedigrotta, a village just outside Naples, that falls in the summer, are first heard the songs that will be sung in all the length and breadth of Italy during the coming year. It is a species of popular competition in which of late even noted composers have taken part. It is amusing to be present at this festival and to listen to the returning crowds all singing in a mass the successful song. For every Italian is quick at picking up a tune. Thus, the day following that in which a new opera has been performed, it is a common thing to hear the workman going out to his work, the baker's boy or the milkman bringing their wares, whistling or humming the most attractive air, and they will repeat it, too, with exactness and sentiment.

Photo by *Chas. Abéniacar, Naples*

NEAPOLITAN STREET TYPES AT THE FEAST OF PIEDIGROTTA

And many an Italian who owns a piano, even if he cannot read a note, will pick out the new tunes upon the instrument, even though he may only have heard them once.

For every Italian can play and sing, even though often untaught. Work grows under the hands of the factory workers while one of their number sings some well-known ditty and the others fall in with a chorus. Their power to sing at all moments was in the days of the Grand Duke Leopold regarded as a species of barometric test of their content. "If they still sing they will pay the new taxes (cantano, pagano)," was his favourite saying. At Naples while the stevedores are watching the arrival of a steamer they sing in chorus to beguile the tedium of waiting. At Venice, the city of serenades *par excellence*, beside the companies that peregrinate the Grand Canal, performing rather for the diversion of tourists than for their own pleasure, there can be heard as of old the curious monotonous chant to which the piles have always been driven home. This is set in motion by the foreman and the hands follow suit. Each line ends in a prolonged *eh* or *oh* to mark the downward haul on the rope. These songs are mostly invocations to the Madonna to give her help to the labourers.

Singing in Factories.

The learning of singing, it may be mentioned, is obligatory in the Government schools. But Italy also possesses various Governmental Music Schools, where every branch of the art is taught either gratis or at a very small cost, provided the pupil can pass the entrance examinations.

Music in the Schools.

Opera, as I have said, is the national form of music, and, no matter how old and often-repeated the work chosen to be performed, the "theatres of music"—as the Italians call them in contradistinction to the "theatres of prose" (plays)—are always crowded with every class of audience. And it is the people who are the severest judges and hiss most mercilessly if a singer sings false. When a new work has been hissed in a town it is

At the Theatres.

useless to repeat it there, and if hissed elsewhere it must be removed from the répertoire. Unfortunately, from the same lack of funds and also from the same itinerant methods of which I spoke concerning the drama, opera is rarely as well performed as it should be in Italy. The chief exceptions are Milan, and above all Bologna, the true home of serious music. Too often the orchestra is insufficient and this also because for lack of funds to maintain a permanent orchestra a director is obliged to have recourse to scratch companies, in which many of the players are not even professionals, but men who exercise this art as a secondary means of livelihood or as a diversion.

Village Bands.

There has recently been a marked revival of interest in bands of wind instruments, and this also extends to the Army, where the playing too often left much to be desired. To own a band is the ambition of every village and every district, and as a rule one of these or a choral society is to be found in every centre, recruited from among the labouring class, who will play for the benefit of their fellow citizens on festal days (and Italy has many such), and will grind hard at practising their instrument even after a heavy day's work. These bands are frequently subsidized by the Commune, which does not, however, pay the executants, who lend their services with much pleasure; it however recompenses the director and also puts at the band's disposal a locality for practice, lends the instruments and furnishes the uniforms. And of these uniforms, cut in military style, the men are most proud. It is in the south that the best of these bands are met with. Some large cities, however, like Rome and Venice, can boast of really excellent companies. To subsidize these bands Italy spends over two million francs annually, a proof of how largely they enter into the national requirements. In return these bands must play in the public piazzā on all solemn occasions. Where the military are quartered it is their band that has to

Open-air Performances.

fulfil this service. No greater proof of the Italian's love of music can be found than to be on a Sunday in one of these squares at the playing of the band. People will stand for hours, wet or shine, hot or cold, to listen in silence to the stirring strains, marking approval or disapproval at the end of each piece. At the funeral of some eminent citizen these bands generally accompany the procession from the house of the defunct to the church, playing funeral marches or solemn airs.

These open-air performances may be defined as the concerts of the people. For though each larger city possesses a Philharmonic Hall in which, chiefly during Lent, concerts are given, these are all exceedingly high-priced, and are more often private speculations to enable some singer or player to make him or herself heard to a select public. Concerts of good music at popular prices are almost unknown.

Concerts.

Musical criticism is exercised in Italy as elsewhere by the newspapers, and this criticism is not always impartial. The public, however, forms its own judgments quite independently of the Press, and hot and eager will such discussions prove at times in cafés or other meeting places. A few purely musical papers exist, such as the *Rivista Musicale*, a serious publication written with knowledge and critical acumen.

Musical Criticism.

CHAPTER XIII

ITALY AT PLAY

"A CARNIVAL Nation"—such was the contemptuous epithet levelled at Italy in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century by superficial observers, who did not take into account that the political conditions of the times excluded Italians from active participation in their country's life and compelled their energies into a frivolous groove. Still, it is beyond question that this happy-natured, light-hearted people love amusement—and why should they not?—and *festa* is one of the first words a foreigner learns to understand when he comes to the Peninsula.

Love of Amusement.

These *feste* are of two kinds, civil and religious, and between them they absorb a considerable number of days in the year's course. But, besides the fixed *feste*, there are the ordinary diversions of every-day life. Italy is so varied in its manners and customs owing to its varied geographical and civil development, so multiform in its traditions, that it cannot be judged from one point of view. Its intimate soul has not yet attained, and perchance owing to racial divergence, never will attain, to the homogeneity of, for example, England, Germany, or France.

In the larger cities of northern and central Italy, with the exception of local and traditional fêtes, there no longer exist special forms of amusements. In important centres like Turin, Milan, Genoa, Florence, and Rome, amusements are available every day, and at every hour. Of the Italian love for theatre-going I have already spoken, and of the large part this occupies in their life. Of recent years operettas as well as café chantants have proved attractions to city dwellers.

Public Amusements in Cities.

Photo by *Chas. Abéniacar, Naples*

DRAWING OF THE LOTTO

The public likes to be gently amused while discussing a cup of coffee or a glass of beer, listening to light, graceful strains or to songs that provoke a smile and demand no intellectual effort.

It is in these localities that a foreigner can note the extreme sobriety of the people. A cup of coffee costing 25 centimes, an ice or a glass of beer will be all the refreshment partaken of during a sitting of many hours. The Italian is frugal and abstemious both in eating and drinking, and does not need to refresh his inner man every few hours like his Northern brethren.

Sobriety of the Italians.

It was at one of these cafés that the quick-change artist, Fregoli, first made his appearance and his name, rising from being a common soldier of the ranks, who played these tricks to amuse the weary hours of an Abyssinian campaign, to world-fame and wealth.

There is perhaps nothing that strikes a visitor to Italy with so much surprise as the number of people to be met with in the streets at all hours of the night and morning, and the question is continually asked "When do the Italians sleep?" for late and early is there noise and movement. There are certain cities, for instance, Genoa and Bologna, in which the nocturnal life seems as intense as that of day. The fact is, the Italian seems to need less sleep than a Northerner appears to require, whether by habit or social convention or method of life. These nocturnal pedestrians are usually habitués of the theatre, the cafés, and the gaming clubs.

Late Hours.

Gambling.

Gambling is a vice particularly prevalent in the upper classes, to the ruin of many an old patrician fortune. In the lower orders it takes the shape of playing in the Government Lotto, of which more anon. The men referred to above would think they could not sleep if they had not first gone in for some amusement, however innocent.

The mass of the population, however, goes to bed about

midnight, and rises early. They concede to themselves the pleasure of theatre-going or café-visiting chiefly on Sunday or Thursday (Thursday is the conventional weekly half-holiday), or any festival days, local or national. The popular cafés are packed on Thursday and Sunday nights, and if the evening is warm the overflow sits in the street or square on which the café abuts. For on those nights the good burgher does not go out alone but is accompanied by his wife and children or other female relatives, all dressed out in their Sunday best. And it is astonishing what a brave show is this Sunday best, how women whose relatives have minute salaries, and who, therefore, cannot have much money to spend on dress, manage to appear in the last fashions and in the freshest-looking clothes. The fact is, the Italian woman is clever with her hands and her needle, and she also has a social standard of her own which she rigidly maintains. She would rather stay at home than look shabby or be out of the mode, and she will make any sacrifice, and so for the matter of that will the men, to *far figura*, as they call it, that is, put in a good appearance in public, however untidy or shabby they may be in private life. As a rule, indeed, these good clothes are reserved for the street and are taken off and carefully cleansed and put away the moment the house is re-entered. Further, both Italian men and women are always well *coiffé*, and that adds to their natty appearance, the women usually having beautiful hair.

Visits to Theatre and Café.

Standard of Dress in Public.

So far does this ambition to *far figura* carry all social classes, that in the poorer south, where some of the impoverished aristocracy cannot afford to keep a carriage and pair of horses of their own (and to keep a carriage is regarded as a social imperative in certain circles) a number of families will club together to use a common vehicle on fixed days of the week, and by an arrangement of change of doors they are each

The Common Vehicle.

able to drive out in a coach that bears on its panels their particular coat of arms.

In the north of late an interest has sprung up for sport and athletics, in bicycle races and automobile riding, and these competitions also attract crowds, but, happily, the deplorable betting element has not followed suit.

Country Outings.

In the north, too, an improved understanding of hygienic conditions has created the good habit of country outings on festival days. The Milanese are specially devoted to this form of recreation, and the cheap and rapid electric communication that exists between that city and the lovely Lake Country gives them a large choice of goals. And there is this great advantage that in every village, no matter how small, there will always be found an inn where good, cheap and tasty food can be obtained. For the Italian, if he does not eat much in bulk, knows how to eat well and wholesomely, and as every Italian, man or woman, can cook, they will not tolerate ill-prepared viands. In this way, during the fine season, entire families will turn out for a day's airing, including the smallest baby (Italians love children too well to leave them out of their treats), and also generally including the servant, if only one is kept, for they are good to their domestics and reckon them as members of the family circle.

Summer Villas.

The richer classes, like the richer classes all the world over, emigrate in the summer to their villas (hence the expression *villeggiatura*), to the mountains or to the sea. At the seaside a very lively *mondain* existence is usually led. The Italian is gregarious, he finds no pleasure in watching in solitude the sad sea waves. He likes to bathe in company and enjoy his evenings in society. At the seaside resorts, such as Leghorn, Viareggio, Rimini, Venice, Palermo and many others, a regular course of balls, concerts, swimming-matches, picnics and what not else are in daily swing.

It may really be said that the old carnival has been replaced

by these spring and summer fêtes. For the official Carnival that falls before Lent has practically disappeared, whether from the fact that the nation has grown more serious or that this species of diversion does not meet the requirements of modern life. Before the Unification of the Kingdom, in the old petty States into which Italy was dismembered, only bound together by the Laws of the Church, Carnival was the time exclusively set aside for diversion. Only then were the theatres open, and only then were masked Corsi allowed with the throwing of flowers and bon-bons and all the rest of the mad revelry. But punctually at midnight of Shrove Tuesday this had to end. The Government gave the signal, all the theatres had to ring down their drop curtains and the city once more returned to its normal somnolent existence.

Disappearance of the old Carnival.

Now all this is changed. It is possible to have Carnival all the year round for all who wish it, provided they have time and money. Still the Carnival tradition lingers on, and at that season masked balls and dancing of all kinds are more frequent, the theatres, the circuses, are more visited, and endless series of dances are given in all families. In less prosperous homes it is not rare for the guests to give to their hostess some fixed quota that shall cover the cost of a modest buffet. The Italians, however, do not come together to eat and drink. Dinner-parties are rare events, and usually reserved for family reunions, and there are regular at home evenings at which no refreshment of any kind is served. The guests really come together to converse, and happily in Italy conversation is not a lost art. The Italians of both sexes and all ages love to dance. Few entertainments, even of the most serious kind, such as a lecture, but end in what is called *fare due salti* (a hop or two). All through the winter somewhere or other dancing is going on for every class. The small Government officials, the workmen, belong to so-called "Recreation Clubs" that are numerous in every large city and exist not only in the

Masked Balls and Dancing.

smallest, but even in the villages. These organise balls for their members and here the mothers gladly accompany their daughters, often not without a secret hope that they may there find a life-partner. For in Italy for a girl to remain unmarried is still regarded as an eccentricity and rather a family disgrace, but, as in France, a dowry, no matter how small, is an indispensable requisite, and every father knows this and saves and provides to the best of his ability. The girls, too, prepare their trousseaux of household and personal linen years before a marriage can even be contemplated. All this helps towards family frugality.

Recreation Clubs.

But, to return to our Recreation Clubs, these are of all kinds, mutual benefit clubs, reading rooms, sometimes even little gambling centres, and they generally represent some social group. Thus, there are clubs for Government employés, for tradesmen, for workmen, and so forth. In smaller centres there are usually only two, one for the better classes, one for the workmen.

Besides these forms of amusements Italy has fêtes that are peculiar to herself, and these are sharply divided into civil and religious. These civil fêtes, which rather answer to an English Bank Holiday, and are also school holidays, include the anniversary of Victor Emmanuel's death, the King and Queen's birthdays, the anniversaries of some of the Risorgimento battles, the day on which Charles Albert gave his nation a Constitution, and above all the 20th of September that commemorates the breaching by the Italians of the Porta Pia at Rome, the incorporating of that metropolis into the Italian Kingdom, in fact the keystone of the arch.

Civil Fêtes.

Noble though these fêtes are in purpose, and wise and desirable as it is that a people's patriotism should be thus kept aflame, truth compels me to admit that these *feste* in practice are generally rather dull and pompous affairs, in which a good deal of official red tape and prosaic official speechifying

reigns supreme. For the ordinary citizen, except for the fact that the shops are often closed half the day, these fêtes make little difference, though his eye is gratified by the public fountains playing their full jets of water, by the picturesque *carabinieri*, or government police, wearing their best and most picturesque holiday attire, with a coloured plume stuck into their cocked hats, by the pretty Italian flag flying from practically every house, making gay splashes of colour in the often gravely sombre streets, and last, but to the Italian of the middle and lower orders not least, by the playing of municipal or military bands in one or more of the city's open spaces.

Religious Fêtes.

It is, however, in the traditional local fêtes, or those that still more or less depend upon the Church, or take origin from her, that the Italian soul reveals itself. For here as ever the Roman Church shows herself astute in her deep and subtle comprehension of humanity's needs, be it in the matter of pleasure or of pain. Of these *feste* it is no exaggeration to say that not only each of the hundred Italian cities has its own, always quite individual and different from that of the others, but even every little village. This variety is mostly induced by the circumstance that each inhabited centre has its local saint, popularly known as its "celestial patron." Thus, Rome has St. Peter, Milan St. Ambrose, Florence St John the Baptist, Venice St. Mark, Palermo St. Rosalia, Naples St. Januarius. There are few of these fêtes which cannot be traced back in origin to pagan times, and in many cases their modern expression is but a Christian adaptation of the older religious customs. It is usually on the birthday of the tutelary saint that his fête is celebrated with religious and civil rejoicings. Except in the smaller centres church processions are no longer allowed in the streets, but wherever such processions still take place in the open they are invariably a picturesque and attractive sight. More often than not they

Church Processions.

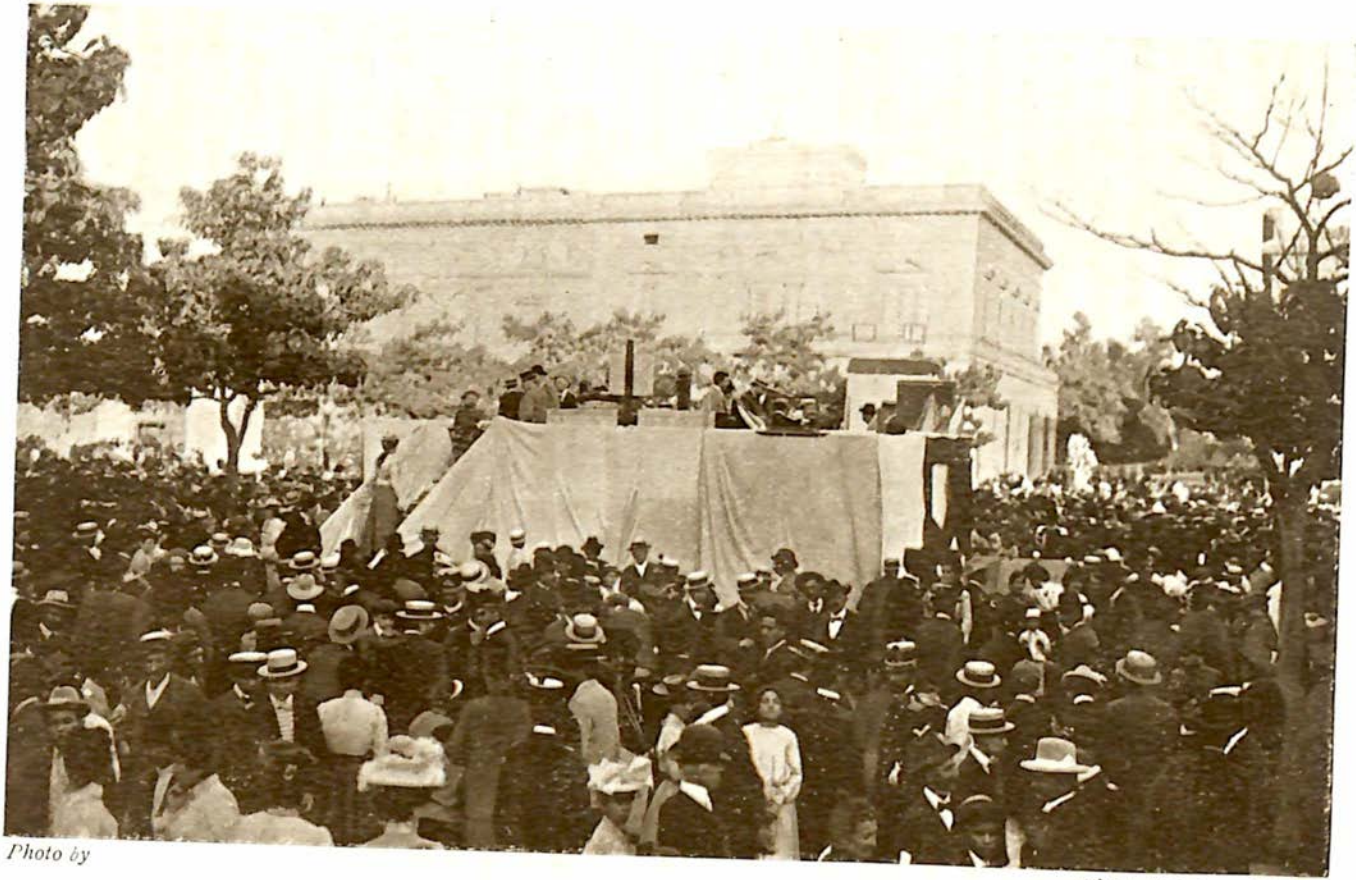


Photo by *Chas. Abéniacar, Naples*

PREPARATIONS FOR A TOMBOLA

occur after sunset by torchlight, which adds to the effect and shrouds the frequent tawdriness of dress and appointments. Some of the old church banners, lamps and brocades, however, that are borne on these occasions, are splendid heirlooms that many an antiquity collector now covets in vain, as the new laws prohibit the sale of church properties. To walk in the procession is still esteemed a high distinction in the smaller places, and parents will save and scrape to provide their little ones with the outfit for an angel, a John the Baptist, a St. Catharine, a monk or a nun; and very pretty do these little ones look in their rig out, and wonderful often is their physical endurance, for they may walk for hours under the hot sun or in the late evening. Now and again a little angel or a St. John will give out, and will be carried awhile in his father's stalwart arms, making a comic and incongruous picture.

As a rule these fêtes end in a general illumination and in those fireworks so dear to the Southern heart. Illuminations in Italy are always pretty, and generally the smaller the place the prettier. Only in large towns and on some of the public edifices is gas or electric light utilized. The usual method is still the charming way of placing lighted candles in every house window or tiny terra-cotta lamps that burn oil and shed a soft, tender sheen, and also of slinging little coloured glass lamps across the streets like garlands. These terra-cotta lamps, which cost less than a farthing each, are the exact replicas of those unearthed in Roman and Etruscan tombs.

Illuminations and Fireworks.

Where things are done with more luxury the assistance of specialist illumination artists are called in, such as Fantappié, the Florentine, who was summoned to London on the occasion of King Edward's Coronation. He is skilful and original, too, in arranging what are called torchlight processions, often instituted if some distinguished personage visits a city, but these are not torchlight processions in the ordinary acceptation. A whole scene is imagined, generally of fruits or

flowers, which are reproduced on a large scale, resulting in walking bouquets or orchards under which the human bearers of the lights are concealed.

The further south we go in Italy the greater is the enthusiasm for fireworks, and some of these are beautiful as well as characteristic. But what the populace loves above all is that they should go off with great bangs, and the more noise they make the better the people are pleased. Another southern delight on *festa* days is to fire off squib crackers and other small explosives, and frequently on the feast of a celestial patron these deafening reports begin at dawn and never cease till long past sunset. In the south some of these explosives are even taken into the churches and fired off at the most solemn moment of the service, such as at the Elevation.

Another favourite pastime are the *tombole* drawn in the public squares. These *tombole* are peculiar to Italy, and often arouse the curious speculation of travellers as to their nature. The game is played much after the manner of the Government Lotto which takes place once a week at the same hour in various centres, and which, since the balance in the account is always in its favour, is a source of great gain to the State.

The Public Tombolas.

In tombola the players can choose ten numbers out of ninety. These numbers are inscribed in the register, the player retaining his card and paying the prize fixed plus 50 centimes or a franc. At a certain day and hour, in a public place, the numbers are drawn and a money prize is given to whoever is first to proclaim that all five numbers of his ticket have been drawn. His claims are at once verified and if exact the drawing continues, the tombola, or the gross sum promised, going to the person who has in his hand ten of the numbers drawn, and who first makes this announcement.

These public tombolas have to be authorized by the Provincial Prefect, and are often held for charitable purposes. To show how gains are made it must be remembered that the

prizes for five lucky numbers may be 300 or 500 francs and 600 or 1000 for the tombola, while thousands of tickets are sold, perhaps as many as five thousand at one franc each.

The public displays intense interest at these public extractions, eagerly discussing the numbers, which all have a popular significance, of which the clue is to be read in the "Book of Dreams," perhaps the most widely-read volume in the Peninsula. For instance, 13 means death, 22 a carriage, 77 means crooked legs, and so forth.

If some poor fellow has missed announcing his good luck at once he is made a butt and laughing-stock, and the hisses and whistling are deafening. The curses of those who have lost by one number are also loud and long, and swell the general clamour.

A variant of this game is sometimes played in family circles. There are also so-called Telegraphic Tombolas, authorized by the State, for which the tickets are sold all over Italy, but which are drawn in one city only. Forty-five numbers are publicly extracted, and the result is communicated by wire and published in the newspaper, leaving a margin, fifteen or twenty days, for the lucky winner to send his ticket to the Committee. The prize is distributed among those who among the first 45 numbers have won the tombola.

The Telegraphic Tombolas.

Popular, too, are the *cuccagne* that oblige the player to swarm up a well-oiled pole and try to strike a flag that crowns the summit, the possession of which entitles him to a prize. Of course, few if any reach the top, and tumbles and failures provoke general merriment.

The Cuccagne.

Fairs are yet another attraction, but these resemble fairs all the world over, with their circus and conjurors and clowns and merry-go-rounds.

Florence has a curious local form of fair that occurs the last three Sundays in Lent. It varies in locality as in name, being known respectively as the fair of the Curiosi

(Curious), the Innamorati (Enamoured), and the Furiosi (Insane). The objects for sale are modest, consisting chiefly of hazel nuts strung into long chains, of melon seeds that the people love to chew, of a local thin wafer cake called *brigidini* that are made fresh every few minutes *coram publico*, of fruits and sweets. The three names are derived from the circumstance that these fairs are supposed to lead to matrimonial combinations. The Curious, that is, the youths, go in search of a sweetheart, and if they find her at the first fair they return to the next already enamoured, and to the last insane with love.

A Florentine Fair.

Another purely Florentine custom is the street-boy amusement on Thursday in Mi-Carême to pin ladders cut out of paper on the backs of unconscious passers-by whom they then hoot in a local derisive phrase, that runs something like "You're in for it!" The origin of this foolery is rooted in the Middle Ages and embodies a bitter satire on nuns who, according to the populace, received lovers at night by means of rope-ladders hung from their windows. The origin of this joke, however, is forgotten, and on this day all the Florentine pastry-cook windows are full of cake and chocolate ladders of all shapes and dimensions that constitute the joy of those who may not play in the street with cut paper.

Street Amusements.

And as the Italian loves to laugh, April Fools' Day is still celebrated. The most elaborate public and private jokes are organized, often requiring weeks of preparation and carried through with a persistency worthy of a better cause. Even the gravest newspapers prepare pitfalls for their readers.

Indeed, if we study the calendar we can discover some local and curious *feste* going on somewhere in Italy on every day of the year. They are sights that no student of manners should omit, and some of them are really splendid artistic spectacles, besides being unique of their kind. Among these a high place belongs to the so-called "Palio" of Siena.

Local Fetês.

Photo by *H. Burton*

PALIO OF SIENA

For Siena, among all Italian cities, is the one where mediæval traditions still survive. Twice a year are celebrated those wonderful horse-races, on July 2nd, in honour of the Visitation of the Virgin, and on August 16th, in honour of her Assumption; the former being rather a full-dress rehearsal for the latter. The fact that the *festa* falls in the dog days prevents the presence of the ordinary tourist and has perchance helped—low be it spoken—to retain for it its frankly Italian colouring.

The Palio at Siena.

It is needful first of all to know that the city is divided into seventeen *contrade* or wards, each bearing a name, such as the Tortoise, the Goose, the Eagle, the Caterpillar, of which each has its especial emblems and colours, and its fierce local patriotism. Each contrada also owns a horse, a jockey, a trumpeter, a drummer, a standard-bearer, pages, and a banner bearing its colours and emblems. Each has also a peculiar dress, that usually consists of short jackets of satin, silk or velvet, and trunk hose, generally parti-coloured, or else of coats of mail. The pages and some of the older men too, wear wigs of flowing locks.

The race itself is run in the splendid Piazza del Campo, the shell-shaped concave amphitheatre facing the grandly solemn Municipal Palace, and literally all Siena and the neighbourhood pours out to see it. The throng that fills the space inside the circular track set aside for the race is a wonderful mass of gay colour and of movement, the large Leghorn hats worn by the Sienese *contadine* and the perpetually fluttering fans being a special feature.

The Racecourse.

But before the race is run each horse, accompanied by its jockey, is taken to the parish chapel of its contrada to be sprinkled with holy water and blessed. For this a special form of service exists. When the established hour at last sounds, and it is always near to evening, the Palio is begun by a stately procession round the Piazza of all the *comparse* of the contrade,

Preliminary Functions.

of the standard-bearers and trumpeters of the Commune, of a car decorated with the banners of all the contrade and the prize Palio. In this splendid pageant over 200 persons take part, all clad in fourteenth century costume, so that it seems some old fresco come to life. A unique feature is the *sbandierata*, a method of displaying the various banners peculiar to the Sienese and which requires much practice. With extraordinary agility and grace the standard-bearers cause the flags to revolve about their necks, pass them between their legs, whirl them around their bodies in a number of fantastic figures, throw them up into the air and catch them again and in all these manœuvres manage to keep them displayed and fluttering.

The Race.

Hereupon follows the real race. The horses, which are distributed by lot, are ridden bare-backed and each jockey manipulates his *nerbo*, a stout whipcord, but he uses it not to strike his own steed but rains blows upon his adversary to hinder his progress. Three times do they gallop wildly round the piazza, the populace accompanying them with deafening shouts of encouragement or imprecation. When all is over, and victory has fallen to a contrada, there ensues a scene that is indescribable, and incomprehensible also to a cold Northerner. The whole crowd swarms out of the enclosure and mixes among the horses and jockeys, protesting or acclaiming, some kissing the victorious horse and rider, others desiring to tear both limb from limb. Indeed, if twenty or more *carabinieri* did not quickly force their way through this crowd and carry off horse and rider, savage scenes might result, for the people can never be persuaded that the race has been fairly run and won. Not unfrequently the jockey has to be kept away for some days until the excitement has cooled. But he reappears in time for the traditional banquet given by the victorious contrada a week after the race. This banquet is held in the street, and usually the victorious horse itself is present decked in all his bravery, eating at the

foot of the table out of a manger filled with equine dainties. In connection with the Palio it is not without interest to know that our English word jockey is derived thence, from *giacchetto*, the name of the small coat these riders wear.

The Popular Festival of Venice.

It is natural that the popular festival of Venice should take place upon the waters. This Feast of the Saviour, like most of the popular *feste* of Italy, occurs in the summer when the nights are short and fine weather certain. The third Sunday in July is its immemorial date and special excursion trains are run on this occasion from all parts of Italy. The night that precedes the *festa* all Venice is abroad, the Grand Canal is crowded with gondolas, with large and small boats in which merry companies eat, drink and sing under a species of canopy of canvas or of intertwined branches from which hang graceful and varicoloured lamps of paper or glass. The main crowd is found, however, on the island of the Giudecca, which is reached on this occasion only by a bridge of boats crossing the great canal from the Zattere. Here fish suppers are *de rigueur*, and while discussing the "fruits of the sea," as the Venetians picturesquely call the inmates of the ocean, the time is gaily passed until the moment of dawn. The magnificent spectacle of a summer sunrise from out the waters is then eagerly watched, after which it is customary either to go to the Lido and take a plunge into the Adriatic or to bathe in the lagoons. A light breakfast of a cup of black coffee, partaken of by the richer in the lovely Square of St. Mark's, precedes the *clou* of the *festa*, consisting in the gaily-clad procession, followed by an immense crowd, that sets out from St. Mark's and proceeds across the bridge of boats to the Church of the Redeemer.

The farther south we go the more *feste* we meet and the more is their originally pagan character accentuated. Truly, they are often Bacchanalian rather than Christian. Such, for example, is the Feast of St. Alfio at Catania, where the men run stark naked for several hours to reach a

certain shrine on the foothills of Etna, and whence they are brought back at evening by the women in gaily-decked carts, beating tambourines and singing wild songs.

Feast of St. Alfio at Catania.

Marriage contracts among the people in Sicily often contain a clause that a man should allow his wife to go at least once during their wedded life to this *festa*, and no pains and no expense is spared in the decoration of the cart and of the little horse that draws it. Whoever has witnessed it will not easily forget the weird, noisy, multi-coloured spectacle of this cavalcade returning amid clouds of dust, down the long Via Etnea of Catania that seems to lead right up to the volcano.

A rather similar *festa* is that of Monte Vergine, near Naples, annually attended by some 80,000 pilgrims, of whom more than half come from the city, where clubs exist to which subscribers pay a weekly sum in order to defray the cost of the journey,—for Monte Vergine is twenty miles from Naples. Arrived at the shrine they mostly make the final ascent on their knees and even lick the ground with their tongues. On their return both sexes are crowned with flowers and carry garlands on long poles. Gay plumes and ribbons also decorate the horses, while the carriages are covered with pictures of the Madonna. At a certain point half-way all descend, dance the Tarantella—a love story in action in which the two dancers represent an enamoured swain and his lady love—or sing the popular songs of the hour. This festival falls on Whit-Sunday.

The Feast of Monte Vergine.

Naples and its environs are truly the district of *feste par excellence*. The city's greatest ecclesiastical function, however, is that which occurs three times a year, on the first Saturday in May, September 19th, and December 16th, when the blood of St. Januarius, the local patron, is said to liquefy. On the rapidity or otherwise with which this miraculous liquefaction occurs the welfare of the city is thought to depend. The

A Neapolitan Function.

priest shows a bottle containing a solid red mass and only after a wait of more or less duration, during which prayers are offered and curses, too, are often muttered at the delay, does he announce "It moves!" whereupon the news passes through the city like wildfire. Formerly cannons were fired and the civil authorities attended. Now it is purely a church festival, and another excuse to the people to close their shops and make holiday.

Panem et Circenses, that old Italian instinct, is not dead, and its manifestations are multiform. A book could be filled enumerating and describing the various shapes it assumes. I must content myself with naming but a few examples.

St. John's Day.

Thus, St. John's Day, the summer solstice of the pagans, is celebrated through the length and breadth of Italy with more or less rejoicing, and is always accompanied by some form of illumination, in many cases that of bonfires lighted at midnight upon the crests of the hills. At Florence, the "Sheepfold of St. John," as Dante calls the city, the public buildings are illuminated in the fairy-like manner that is a local speciality.

An Easter Festival at Florence.

It is, however, the Easter *feste* that the traveller is more likely to attend and of these Florence boasts a ceremony that is unique called the "Scoppio del Carro" (the bursting of the car). On Holy Saturday, at the moment when the Mass has reached the Gloria in Excelsis, an artificial dove, bearing a taper lighted by the Archbishop, shoots along a previously-prepared wire down the whole length of the Cathedral, and sets alight the petards and other fireworks that adorn the traditional car which has been brought hither early in the day drawn by three pairs of splendid milk-white oxen. The cost of this quaint performance is defrayed by the Pazzi family, for it is held to commemorate the doughty deed of an ancestor who brought the sacred fire direct from the Holy Sepulchre, riding backward all the way from Palestine in order that the wind might not extinguish the flame.

Another quaint Florentine festival falls on Ascension Day, and is known as the Festa del Grillo (Cricket). According to immemorial custom, everyone goes out early to the Cascine, the local park, breakfasts there upon the grass, and buys and brings home a cricket. All manner of good luck attends the keeping alive of these little insects for forty days. The custom has an Etruscan origin, and is connected with the immortality of the soul. The quaint, pretty little cages in which the luckless insects are imprisoned are exact replicas of those in which little doves are caged in the famous Pompeian fresco.

Festa del Grillo.

Thus, once again, the ancient and the modern grasp hands in Italy.

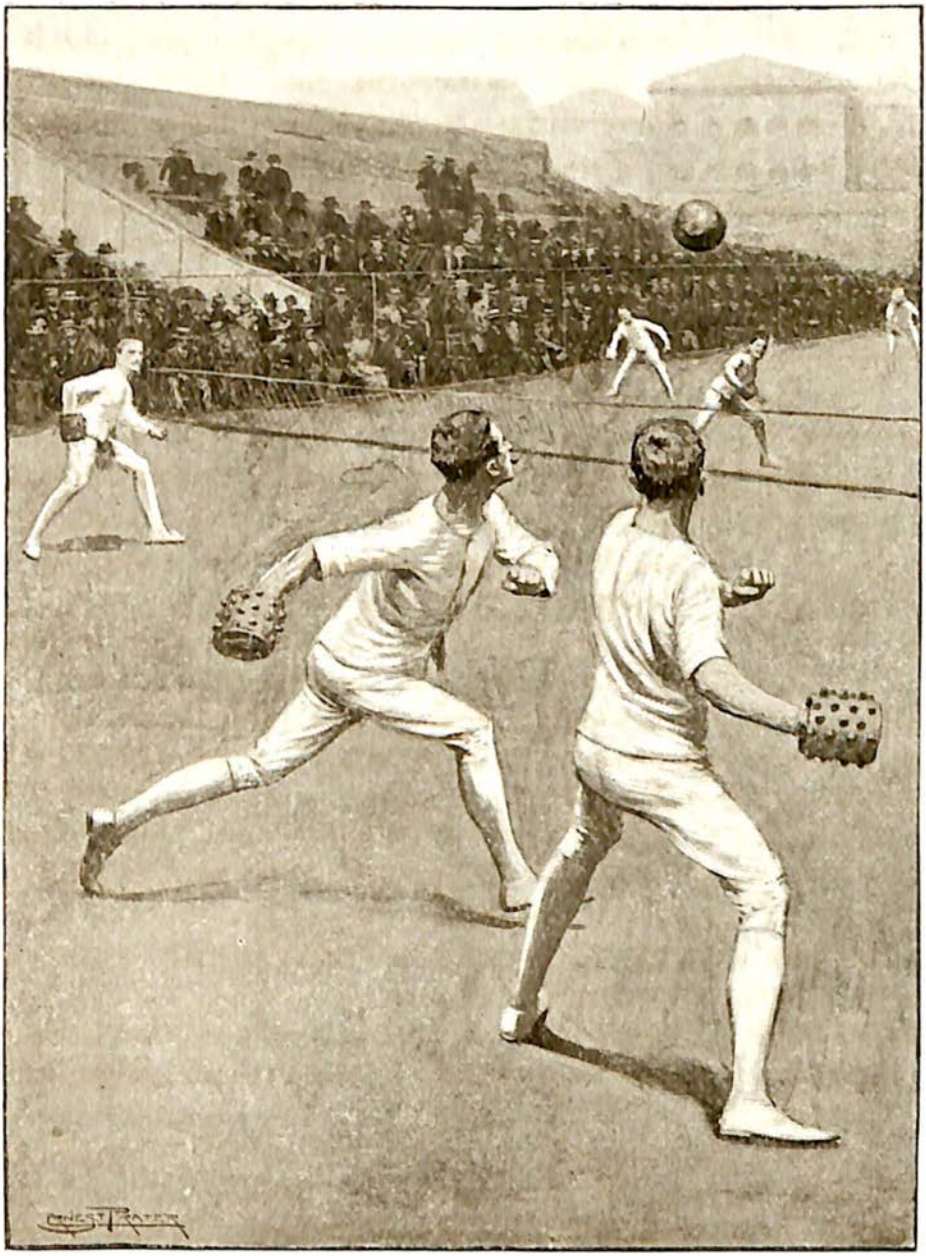
A pretty spectacle can be seen in Florence and the neighbourhood on the eve of the Virgin's birthday, September 8th. In the popular quarters the windows are decorated with paper balloons containing lights, and lights of the same kind mounted on long sticks are carried by the children up and down the streets. These are called *rificolone*. The custom dates from mediæval times when the population of the neighbouring burghs came in crowds to Florence to visit the sanctuary and fair of the Annunciation. It was then that the women were nicknamed *fieracolone*, because when visiting this fair they used to carry candles wrapped in coloured papers during the night hours while waiting patiently under the loggia for the church doors to open.

The Virgin's Birthday.

Such lights wrapped in coloured papers are often a pretty feature hung below some country cart returning home late at evening.

Epiphany is another general holiday on which all children expect presents. Din and noise is its leading feature, which in Rome, in Piazza Navona, attains to deafening proportions. On this day all over Italy boys blow tin or glass trumpets. The latter are of exquisite proportions and resemble the long

Epiphany.



A GAME OF PALLONE

trumpets so often blown by Fra Angelico's angels. It is said that they are sounded to announce the Flight into Egypt.

Italy has no national game like cricket or football, nor are her people great athletes (the climate renders this impossible), but she has two pastimes from which tennis and football respectively derive their origin. The one is Pallone; the other the Giuoco del Calcio which does not differ so greatly from its Anglo-Saxon descendant, except that when played now, on festive occasions, it is played in fourteenth-century costume, and with picturesque ceremonial.

Two Pastimes.

Pallone can be constantly seen. Few spectators of the modern game of lawn-tennis know whence we derive our chalked lines, the central net, the graceful gestures, the rapid strokes. A moment's thought would suffice to convince us that lawn-tennis boasts no Northern origin. Not by brute strength but by rapid calculation and agility of limb are the points gained.

Origin of Lawn-tennis.

The rules of this " big ball " are simple. It is played upon an oblong court one hundred by twenty-five metres in extent. This is divided crosswise in the centre by a line. The players are nine—four on each side, and one pitcher. The implements are an inflated leather ball, ten to twelve centimetres in diameter, and a *bracciale*. This last consists of a cylindrical wooden glove, weighing six pounds, made all in one piece, cut to fit the hand inside, studded outside with hard-wood teeth and bound with steel bands. The players arrange themselves near the two extremes of the court, four on each side, and the pitcher takes his place in a square cage in the centre of one end of the court. One set of players is called the *azzurri* (blues), the other *rossi* (reds). The game is begun by the *battitore* (pitcher) serving the ball to each of the receivers on the opposite side in turn. The ball must go over the cord extended in the middle of the court, like the central net of the

The Rules of Pallone.

tennis-ground, touch the ground once on each side, and be returned to the player on the extreme left of the other side. The ball is received and returned with the wooden glove, re-returned, and so forth. Each time that either side receives and returns the ball, making it comply with the requirements —that is, pass above the central cord and not go out of the limits of the court—fifteen points are gained. The maximum number of points is forty-five, but it is called forty. That is to say, the third and last round adds but ten and out to the preceding thirty points. Then the players reverse sides, and the pitcher of the winning side serves the ball.

This game dates from the sixteenth century, and in many of the provincial Italian towns the *bracciali* count their years of active service by the hundreds. They are handed down from generation to generation, usually belonging to the noble family of the place, and loaned to each succeeding player as he makes his reputation on the field.

The costumes worn are traditional, consisting of a white frilled jacket, white frilled short hose, white stockings and white canvas shoes, and red and blue sashes to distinguish the teams.

As will be seen from this too cursory survey there is choice enough and to spare of means of amusement in the Peninsula.

EPILOGUE

Such all too much in outline the picture I have attempted to draw of the Italy of to-day, which I have called the Italy of the Italians to distinguish it from that Italy which is too often the only one the traveller knows. Italy does not merely "mourn with memories." If I have shown that this newest Italy is also well worthy of study, of intelligent sympathy, my highest aims are fulfilled. Truly, the Italy of the Italians is a land pulsating with hope and promise—a land that in a brief fifty years by its own ability and energy, from a congeries of little States, ill-ruled and exploited by Churchmen, Bourbons, Hapsburgs, Napoleonic upstarts, has raised itself by its own unaided efforts to the rank of a first-class power. Modern Europe has no parallel to this. Do not let us dwell too heavily, as the stranger is often inclined, upon Italian shortcomings. Italy is a young nation, and will work through her difficulties as other nations have done. With her long seaboard, her fertile soil, her keenly intelligent population, she has beyond all doubt a rich future before her; the third Italy, in her more modern manner, will yet be a worthy successor of the two great Italies of the past. That Italy is a good land to live in, free in her institutions, in some respects the freest on the Continent, and the most hospitable to the stranger, is proved by the large number of Outlanders who settle within her borders, and who after dwelling there some years would not live elsewhere. For Italians are a good people to live amongst; they have so many sterling qualities that with tact and goodwill it is never necessary to discover their faults. And what nation is lacking in these?

Gratefully, therefore, I send out this little book, which has been to me a very labour of love. May it serve as a token of the deep thankfulness I feel to the people, and to the land

that for now some twenty years has been to me a second and dearly loved home. Those who may carry it with them in their knapsacks when they visit this "land of lands" I can but urge to keep eyes and ears open also for the Italy that throbs around them, that feels and acts and thinks and works and meditates to-day in this twentieth century, and believe me that glorious and lovely and eloquent as is the message of the past and decaying Italy—no one can love it better than I—that which the new can offer is in many ways no less glorious; and, moreover, to it belongs the future, for it has youth and hope and time upon its side. And herewith *Vale.*

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